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Bored ship.

The Race-horse, and Carcase Bombs, blocked up in the Ice.

Published Oct. 21 1783 by J. Fielding, N^o 23, Paternoster Row.

THE
BRITISH NAVIGATOR;
CONTAINING
CAPTAIN ELLIS'S VOYAGE
TO THE
Northern Frozen Ocean.

ALSO THE
VOYAGES OF CAPTAIN WOOD
AND
COMMODORE PHIPPS,
IN SEARCH OF A
NORTH-EAST PASSAGE.

To which is prefixed,
AN ACCOUNT OF THE LOSS OF
THE SAINT LAWRENCE FRIGATINE,
Which was wrecked on the Island of Cape Breton,
In the Year 1780,
And the miraculous Escape of Part of the Crew.

LONDON,
Printed for JOHN FIELDING, No. 23, Pater-
noster-row.

The Race-horse, and Carcase Bombs, blocked up in the Ice.
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Published Oct. 7. 1783 by J Fielding, N^o 23, Pater noster Row.

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BRITISH NAVIGATOR.

ACCOUNT of the Loss of the ST. LAW-
RENCE Brigantine, which was wrecked on
the Island of CAPE BRETON in 1780.

MR. Prenties, an ensign of the eighty-fourth regiment of foot, on the seventeenth of November, 1780, embarked on board the St. Lawrence brigantine, then lying at Quebec, and bound to New-York, being charged with dispatches from Gen. Haldimand to Sir Henry Clinton. Having received sailing orders, we weighed anchor, and proceeded on our voyage, in company with a schooner bound to the same port.

Contrary winds retarded our passage till the 24th, when the weather proving more favourable, we proceeded down the river St. Lawrence about forty leagues from Quebec; but the wind then veering about to the N. E.

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we were obliged again to anchor. The weather was now intensely cold; and the vessel, being leaky, made so much water as required one pump constantly going. A change of wind soon enabling us to proceed on our voyage, we made the island of Anticosti, which lies at the mouth of the river St. Lawrence. Here we were obliged to beat about for four days, our vessel at the same time encreasing her leak to such a degree, that we were under the necessity of rigging the other pump, and of keeping them both constantly at work.

Being now in a higher latitude, the severity of the cold encreased in proportion, and the ice began to form so fast about the ship as to alarm us exceedingly, lest we should be entirely surrounded by it; which however we prevented, by cutting and breaking vast quantities from her sides. To this task, with that of keeping her pumps at work, the crew, together with the passengers, were scarcely equal, only nineteen persons being on board, of whom six were passengers, and the remainder very indifferent seamen. As for the captain, from whom, in the present emergency, we might have expected some degree of exertion, instead of attending to his duty, and the preservation of his ship, he remained continually in his cabin in a state of intoxication.

The wind coming round to the N.E. on the 29th, we proceeded down the gulf of St. Lawrence, with two feet water in the hold.

hold. The wind kept gradually increasing till the first of December, when it blew a perfect gale from the N. E. and the crew, being almost overcome with cold and fatigue, seeing no prospect of gaining upon the leak, the water having already increased to four feet in the hold, nor a possibility of making any port, they came to a resolution of working no longer at the pumps. They accordingly left off working, and declared themselves quite indifferent about their fate, preferring the alternative of going to the bottom together with the vessel, to that of suffering such severe and incessant labour in so desperate a situation. However, by the force of persuasion and promises, together with the timely distribution of a pint of wine per man, which Mr. Prenties had fortunately brought on board, they were diverted from this desperate resolution. All this time, the captain remained unconcerned in his cabin, without making the least exertion.

The gale continued increasing during the second and third of December, and the ice formed so thick on the ship's sides, as very much to impede her way through the water, which furnished us with new labour, that of cutting it off, as fast as it formed, with saws and axes. The leak continued to gain ground. The schooner that was in company, far from being able to afford us any assistance, was in as leaky a condition as our own vessel, having struck upon some rocks, through the ignorance or neglect of her pilot. A heavy

snow beginning to fall, it was with the utmost difficulty we could get sight of each other, though at no great distance; and, in order not to part company, we fired a gun every half hour. The schooner at length made no answer to our guns, whence we concluded she had foundered, nor were we wrong in our suspicions; and every one on board perished, being sixteen in number.

The gale considerably increased the following day, and the sea began to run high, with a heavy fall of snow, so as to prevent our seeing twenty yards a-head of the vessel. The men being excessively fatigued, the water had risen to its usual quantity of between four and five feet in the hold. The captain's mate, who was an intelligent young man, and well acquainted with his profession, judged, from the distance we had run, that we could not be far from the Magdalen islands, which lie about midway in the gulf of St. Lawrence. These islands are nothing more than a cluster of rocks, some appearing above, and others hidden under the water, and have been fatal to many vessels. The mate's conjecture was right, and we soon found ourselves among them; but being unable, on account of the heavy fall of snow, to see many yards a-head of the vessel, there appeared little probability that we should pass clear of them all. Not being able to distinguish any one in time to avoid it, we were obliged to leave the vessel to the direction of Providence, and fortunately, if not miraculously,

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we ran through them all without damage. The anxiety and perturbation of mind that the crew and passengers were in, while in the midst of these rocks, may be easily conceived. Now this danger being over, it turned out a fortunate occurrence for us; for, by this time, the sailors, being ready to sink under the accumulated distresses of cold and fatigue, and depressed by the little hopes they had of saving the vessel, had nearly determined a second time to quit the pumps, and leave the vessel to her fate, when, acquiring fresh courage from the dangers we had escaped, they agreed to continue their efforts a little longer.

About five in the morning of the fifth, a large wave broke on the ship's quarter, which stove in our dead lights, filled the cabin, and washed the captain out of his bed, in which he had remained ever since the commencement of the gale. This accident was attended with worse consequences than we at first imagined; for we soon discovered, from the increase of the leaks, that the stern-post had been started by the impulse of the sea. Having nothing in the after-hold, no other resource was left but that of attempting to stop the leaks with beef, which we cut into small pieces for that purpose; but this expedient we soon found ineffectual, and the water continued to gain on us faster than ever. The sailors, finding all their labours useless, and the leak, which was constantly encreasing before, now rendered by our late misfortune

entirely irreparable, abandoned themselves totally to despair, and again refused to work at the pumps any longer. However, they had not long remained inactive, before we contrived once more to persuade them to make another effort to clear the vessel; when, to our great surprise and consternation, we found the pumps so hard frozen that it was impossible to move them.

Every idea of keeping the ship clear was now given up, and in a very short time she filled to the water's edge. Having no longer, as we imagined, the smallest foundation for hope, we resigned ourselves with as much fortitude as possible to our fate, which we expected every moment to be that of going to the bottom. However, when the vessel was quite full, we observed she was very little deeper in the water than before; and then recollecting a circumstance, which the trouble and confusion we had been in had almost obliterated, namely, that we had a quantity of lumber on board, we immediately accounted for the cause of her not sinking beyond a certain depth in the water, and began to entertain hope of saving our lives at least, if we could but prevent her from oversetting till we could make the island of St. John's, or some other island in the gulf. Having no guns on deck, and not much lumber, to render the ship topheavy, we contrived to prevent her from oversetting, by steering directly before the wind. Besides taking care to keep the vessel steady, we used every precaution to secure

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cure our boat from being washed overboard, the loss of which would, in our present circumstances, have been a dreadful misfortune. The cabin, being raised above the level of the main deck, was tolerably clear of water, and afforded us some little shelter from the severity of the weather. Thither we retired, leaving only one man upon deck to govern the helm, who was fastened by a rope, to prevent his being carried away by the waves.

The snow now fell so thick that we could not see the mast-head, and the gale continued. We knew from the distance we had run, that we could not be far from land. The captain imagined from our course, during the night, that we must be near the island of St. John's; but he informed us, that the north-east side of the island was nothing but a continued reef of rocks from one end to the other, and that there was but one harbour where ships could put in, which was on the opposite side of the island. In a few hours after, we observed the waves grew shorter and broke higher, which is always found to be the case on approaching to shore. We now concluded, that we were about to run upon the rocks, which, the captain informed us, skirted the north-east side of the island; and on approaching the land, we laboured under greater dread and apprehension, than amidst all the dangers we had before experienced, the idea of being cast upon these tremendous rocks being more terrifying than that of being buried in the bosom of the ocean.

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Small as our expectations were of saving our lives, Mr. Prenties thought it incumbent on him to take every precaution to save the dispatches he was charged with; and therefore ordered his servant to open his trunks, and collect all the letters they contained. These Mr. Prenties put into a handkerchief, and fastened about his waist. At the same time, his servant offered him the money he found in his trunks, to the amount of one hundred and eighty guineas, which he desired his servant to dispose of as he thought proper, thinking it, in the present emergency, rather an incumbrance than a matter worthy of preservation. His servant, however, thought otherwise, and took care to secure the cash, which was afterwards of more service to us, than could at that time be possibly imagined.

About three o'clock, the weather cleared up suddenly, when we discovered the land at about three leagues distance. This sight gave us no small satisfaction, taking it at first to be the island of St. John's, from which, being inhabited by French and English families, we might have expected some assistance; but on a nearer view we found it had not the least appearance of that island. On our drawing nearer we observed the sea break high, and have a very dismal appearance about three miles from the land. As it was necessary for us to pass through these breakers before we could reach the shore, we expected our fate would be determined there; but,

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contrary to our expectations, there was a considerable depth of water, so that we went over the reef without touching, though not without shipping many heavy seas. The land now began to have a dreadful appearance, seeming at the distance we were off to be high and rocky; but, on approaching within a mile of it, we had the pleasure of descrying a fine sandy beach and a bold shore.

As we advanced, the water continued to have a depth beyond our most sanguine wishes, so as to allow us to come within fifty or sixty yards of the shore before we struck. Now was the time for every man's apprehension to be on the rack, as we might expect, on touching the shore, that the ship would go to pieces. At length she grounded with a violent concussion. On the first stroke the main-mast went out of the steep, and on the second the foremast; but neither of them fell over the side, the deal boards in the hold being stowed so close together, that the masts had no room to play below. At the same time, the rudder was unshipped with such violence as to be near killing one of the sailors. As soon as the ship had grounded, the sea began to beat over her on every part, each wave lifting her four or five feet nearer the shore. In a short time, the stern was beat in by the sea; and then, having no shelter in the cabin, we were obliged to go upon deck, and hang by the shrouds, lest we should be washed overboard. In this uncomfortable situation, we remained till the vessel

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was beat so high by the waves, that we could venture to walk upon deck. We now perceived that the ship's keel was broken, which we imagined would occasion her to go to pieces. This, however, did not happen for the present; which could be attributed only to the boards in the hold being so intervoven with each other, and frozen together by the ice, as to give a sort of solidity to the vessel.

To get out the boat was now our first care, which was not to be accomplished without difficulty, on account of the quantity of ice that was in and about it, and the reduction in number of effective hands, who had intoxicated themselves with liquor. Having with much labour cleared the boat of ice, and prepared her for launching, Mr. Prenties asked, if any were willing to embark with him in the boat, and make the attempt to gain the shore. The sea running so high, that it seemed scarcely possible for the boat to live in it a minute, very few seemed willing to make an experiment so full of risk: so that the boat shoved off, containing only the mate, Mr. Prenties, his servant, two seamen, and a youth who was passenger. What gave us the greatest embarrassment in this undertaking was the surf, which broke over us every moment, and the intenseness of the cold, which froze every drop of water immediately, so as to cover our clothes with a sheet of ice. The ship was lying about forty yards from the shore; but before we got half way to it, we

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were overtaken by a wave that almost filled the boat, and the next drove us on the dry sand.

Finding ourselves once more on land, the joy of having escaped the danger of the ocean, made us for a few moments forget, that we were snatched from them merely to be exposed to others more inevitable; that we had escaped one species of death, probably to undergo another more lingering and painful. What contributed to afflict us, was the distress of our companions whom we had left on board, whose cries and lamentations we could hear very distinctly, but could give them no assistance. The night was now approaching, and we had not long remained in this situation before we found ourselves getting stiff with cold, and the gale continuing as severe as ever, we were obliged to wade, with extreme difficulty, up to our waists in snow, to the shelter of a thick wood about two hundred and fifty yards from the beach. This afforded us some relief from the piercing north-east wind, yet we had no fire to warm our frozen limbs. Freezing as we stood, there was nothing to be done, but to keep the blood in motion by exercise. Mr. Prenties therefore recommended it to the men to move about, he being better acquainted with the nature of frost and cold climates than any of his companions. His advice was strictly adhered to for about half an hour, when the young passenger, being overcome with the severity of the weather, threw himself down,

in order to sleep; for extreme cold always occasions a sleepy sensation that is not easily to be resisted. Every endeavour was used, both persuasion and force, to rouse him, and make him stand on his legs; but all to no purpose. After walking about for half an hour longer, we went to the place where the youth lay, and finding him quite cold, we believed he was dead; but he answered immediately, that he was not yet dead, but should be so very short; and requested of Mr. Prenties, if he survived, to write to his father at New York, and inform him of the circumstances of his son's misfortune. In about ten minutes, we found he had expired, and, as we supposed, without any pain whatever, at least without any acute sensation of it.

The rest of the company was not deterred by the fate of the youth from giving way to this drowsy sensation, and three of them lay down in spite of repeated exhortations. Finding it impossible to keep them on their legs, Mr. Prenties and the mate each broke a branch from the tree, and during the remainder of the night, prevented the men from sleeping, by beating them continually with the branches. This was an exercise useful to themselves, at the same time as it preserved the lives of their companions.

The day light, which we looked for with anxious expectation, at length appeared, when Mr. Prenties and the mate went down to the beach, to see if they could discover any traces of the ship, or our companions on board, when,

when, to their great surprise and satisfaction, they found she had not yet gone to pieces, though the wind continued with unabated severity. The vessel had by this time beat much nearer the shore, so that the distance was but very small at low water, when a method was thought of, by which they were all landed safe, except a carpenter, who was a passenger, and who had the night before made rather too free with the bottle, and could not be persuaded to leave the ship. We were happy, however, to get so many of them on shore, every one of whom, a few hours before, we concluded must have perished.

Fortunately for us all, the captain, before he left the ship, had put in his pocket some materials for striking a light. We therefore went to work in cutting wood with an axe and a saw we had brought on shore with us in the boat. We then made a fire with all possible expedition, and were happy for some time in hovering about it, and warming our benumbed limbs. Considering the extreme cold we had endured for such a length of time, no luxury could be equal to that of the fire; but this gratification was, like many others, to several of our companions, followed by the most excruciating pain, as soon as their frozen parts began to thaw. The distress that was now painted in the faces of these unfortunate men, from the tortures they underwent, was beyond expression.

One Capt. Green, a passenger, had fallen asleep on board the vessel, and was frozen to

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death. This night we passed a little better than the last; yet, notwithstanding we had a good fire, we found extreme inconveniency from the total want of covering, as well as from hunger, a new misery that we had been hitherto unacquainted with. Besides which, the greater part of our number were in the most wretched state imaginable, from the sores occasioned by the frost. The next morning, we found means to extricate the carpenter, whose voice we heard on board the vessel; but this we accomplished with much difficulty, he being very weak, and frozen in different parts of his limbs. We still remained without any kind of provisions, and the want of nourishment began to reduce our strength considerably.

The gale continued as boisterous as ever during the seventh and eighth, and in the night, between the eighth and ninth of December, the ship, from the extreme violence with which the sea broke against her, went to pieces from the stern to the main-mast. By this part of her going to pieces, we obtained some provisions, which were washed on shore. These consisted of pieces of salt beef, some fresh meat that hung over the stern, and a quantity of onions that the captain had on board for sale. This relief was very seasonable, it being now the fourth day since we had eaten any kind of provision whatever. Having no utensils, we dressed our meat in the best manner we could, and made what we thought a most delicious repast. The sense
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of hunger being assuaged, we set to work in collecting all the provisions we could find scattered upon the beach, being apprehensive, that we should not soon get a supply from any other quarter. This done, our next care was to get ourselves under cover, and form some kind of shelter from the piercing blast. This task was not an easy one, so many of the company being unable to move; and of the remainder, none but the mate and Mr. Prenties were capable of any active exertion, being all more or less bitten by the frost. Our number, at this time, consisted of fourteen. Fortunately, a quantity of deals had floated on shore from the wreck, of which we carried about two hundred and fifty into the wood, and by ten at night completed a kind of house, about twenty feet long and ten wide, in the best manner times and circumstances would admit of, we having no nails.

We now proceeded to examine the quantity of provisions we had collected, and had the satisfaction to find, that we had in store between two and three hundred pounds of salt beef, and a considerable stock of onions. As to bread, we had none; for, when the ship went to pieces, the casks were stove, and the bread lost. Frugality and good management were now highly necessary, to make our little stock last as long as possible, it being quite uncertain when we should get more. It was therefore determined, that each man, whether sick or well, should be confined to a

quarter of a pound of beef and four onions per day, as long as the latter should last. This wretched allowance, but just enough to keep a man from starving, was the utmost we thought it prudent to allow ourselves, lest we should be in an uninhabited country; for, as yet, we were uncertain on what coast we were cast away, till, on comparing circumstances, we concluded it must be on the island of Cape Breton.

On the sixth day after we landed, being the 11th of December, the gale abated, and gave us an opportunity to get on board the wreck, when we went to work on opening the hatches; but having only one axe, and the cables being frozen in one solid lump of ice, it took the whole day to accomplish it. The next day, the weather being still moderate, we went again on board, and having cleared away the remainder of the cable, we cut up part of the deck, in order to make room to get out two casks of onions, with a small barrel of beef, containing about one hundred and twenty pounds, and three barrels of apples, shipped by a Jew merchant at Quebec. We likewise found a quarter cask of potatoes, a bottle of oil, which proved very serviceable to the men's sores, another axe, a large iron pot, two camp-kettles, and about twelve pounds of tallow candles. With much difficulty, we got this great supply on shore, and thought ourselves happy in so valuable an acquisition.

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On the 13th, we made it our business to get our provisions stored in a corner of the hut, wher, on opening the apple-casks, we found their contents, to our great surprise, converted into bottles of Canadian balsam; a more valuable commodity, to be sure, than apples, but what we would have gladly exchanged, in our present situation, for something more friendly to the stomach than the constitution. This disappointment, as may be supposed, extorted a few hearty good wishes for the Jew; yet we afterwards found some use for his Canadian balsam, though somewhat different from what he intended it should be applied to.

We went on board once more, on the 14th, and cut as much of the sails as possible from the bowsprit, with part of which we covered our hut, and made it tolerably warm and comfortable, notwithstanding the severity of the weather. By this time, the sores of the men who had been frost-bitten began to mortify, and caused the toes, fingers, and other parts of the limbs affected, to drop off, their zaguish being at the same time almost intolerable. The carpenter, who came on shore after the others, had lost the greater part of his feet, and on the 14th, at night, became delirious, in which unhappy state he continued, till death released him the following day from his miserable existence. We covered him with snow and branches of trees, having neither spade nor pick-axe to dig a grave for him; nor would it have been pos-

sible, if we had been provided with them, the ground being in this climate so hard frozen during the winter as to be almost impenetrable. Three days after, our second mate died in the same manner, having been delirious for some hours before he expired. Several, however, who had been but slightly frozen, recovered in a short time, with the loss of a few toes and fingers, no one having entirely escaped the frost but Mr. Prenties. On the 20th another sailor died, after having been, like the others, some time in a delirium, and was buried, or rather covered, in the same manner. Our number was now reduced to fourteen persons, yet we did not think it prudent to encrease the allowance of provisions, but still kept it at the rate originally fixed on.

Mr. Prenties and the mate frequently went out together, and, from various circumstances had reason to think there might be Indians near at hand. Twenty days being elapsed since our shipwreck, and our provisions being very much reduced, Mr. Prenties began to entertain a suspicion, that there was some foul play during his and the mate's absence at different times from the hut in search of inhabitants. He was therefore determined to find out the truth, if possible, by keeping a constant watch at night. By this means he at length discovered, that the depredators were no others than the captain and two sailors, who had consumed no less than seventy pounds, besides a quantity of onions,

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in so short a space of time. After this, we watched them with the greatest attention.

Several days having passed, without any hopes of seeing any Indians or inhabitants in this place, and having provisions only for six weeks longer, and a few of our men and the captain being recovered, it was proposed to leave our habitation, with as many as could work in the boat, in search of inhabitants. This proposal was readily agreed to; but when we came to think how it was to be put in execution, a new difficulty started itself, that of repairing the boat, which had been beat in such a manner by the sea upon the beach, that every seam was open. We first attempted to stop them with dry oakum, but soon found it would not answer the intended purpose; and having saved no pitch from on board the wreck, we began to despair of the possibility of repairing them. Mr. Prenties, at length, thought of making a kind of succedaneum for pitch of the Canadian balsam, which had been shipped for apples, and had been by us brought on shore under that deception. We accordingly went to work in making the experiment, and boiled a quantity of the balsam in an iron kettle we had saved, and frequently taking it off the fire to cool, we soon brought it to a proper consistence. A sufficient quantity of it being prepared, we turned up the boat, and having cleared her bottom, gave her a coat of the balsam, which effectually stopped all crevices for the present. This done, we got a small sail

sail rigged to a mast, which shipped and unshipped occasionally.

With much difficulty and fatigue, we got our boat in tolerable condition by the first of January, so that she could swim without making much water; likewise our mast and sail rigged, in order, when the wind should permit, to afford some relief to the rowers. It was agreed to take six in the boat, the captain and his mate, Mr. Prenties and his servant, and two sailors; of the others, none were so far recovered, as to be judged equal to the fatigues we might expect in this expedition. Our shoes being all nearly worn out, Mr. Prenties employed himself, during the whole of the next day, in making a kind of mowkifins, or Indian shoes, of canvas. His needle was nothing more than the handle of a pewter-spoon, which he had fashioned as well as he could for the purpose, and the same canvas supplied him with thread. As soon as he had made twelve pair, which were two for each man of the party, we divided the provisions that remained into fourteen equal parts, which amounted only to a quarter of a pound of beef each day for six weeks. Those that were to stay behind, shared as much as we who were to go in the boat, notwithstanding the great fatigue we had every reason to expect. Every necessary preliminary being adjusted, we proposed setting off the next day; but the wind blowing fresh at N. E. we were obliged to remain where we were till the fourth. By this time

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the ice, floating in prodigious quantities on the coast, and in some places collecting, and blocking up the bays, rendered our undertaking extremely hazardous; yet we thought it more adviseable to face any danger, and to encounter any hardship, than to remain, with a certainty of starving, in our present situation.

On the 4th, however, having made every preparation possible, and taken leave of our companions, we set off on our forlorn expedition. The night coming on, and the wind beginning to encrease, we were in some danger of being blown out to sea. We therefore put into a bay, and set to work, in lighting our fire, and cutting our wood for the night. Having cut some pine branches, the smallest of them served us to lie on, and the larger, in the form of a wigwam, to shelter us from the inclemency of the weather. As soon as we were refreshed, three of us set off along the beach, in order to get to a high point of land at about two miles distance, from whence we hoped to make some useful discoveries. Having gained the top of it, we descried, to our inexpressible joy, a few houses about a mile distant, towards which we directed our course, having no doubt but that we should now meet with some relief; but on coming to them, we found they were only the remains of some old store-houses, which had been built there for the curing of cod-fish, and to all appearance had been abandoned for many years. This was a mortifying disappointment

pointment to us. However, as we walked along the point, we gathered about a quart of cranberries, some of which we eat, reserving the remainder for our companions. Even these discoveries, trifling as they were, gave us hopes of finding some inhabitants on our proceeding further.

The ice setting in, and the wind being very violent, we were detained in this dreary situation till the 11th of January, when the weather becoming moderate, and a fine light breeze blowing along the coast, we launched our boat with much difficulty, being greatly reduced in strength for want of a due degree of nourishment. Having got clear round the point of the land, we hoisted our sail, and put before the wind. About eleven o'clock at night we got round another point; but finding no place that we could possibly land on, we were obliged to keep along the coast till two in the morning, with our boat so leaky, that two men were constantly employed in keeping her clear of water. The wind encreasing, and a stony beach approaching, on which we should not have thought it expedient to land even had the wind been moderate, we were obliged to put on shore and immediately got our provisions out of the boat. The beach was of some height from the surface of the water, which rendered it impossible for us to haul up our boat. We were therefore obliged to leave it to the mercy of the sea.

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The wind came round to the N. W. on the 13th, and blowing very hard, the sea beat with such violence against the shore, as to drive our boat twenty yards higher than she was, and beat several holes in her bottom. Now was the time for us to feel all the miseries of our present situation; for, being surrounded by precipices, which prevented us from sheltering ourselves in the woods, and having so little covering, and no firing but what we collected from some pieces of timber, which floated accidentally upon the shore, we could but just keep ourselves from actual freezing. The same weather continued for eight days, with a prodigious fall of snow, which added to our other inconveniencies.

On the 21st the weather became moderate, and the snow ceased, having in the course of this last week fallen to the depth of three feet. This change of the weather gave us an opportunity of cooking our provisions, which we had done but once since our landing. As the water the meat was boiled in afforded us almost as much nourishment as the meat itself, our not being able to cook any thing hitherto was a great misfortune to us.

On examining our boat the next day, we found she had received considerable damage, the coat of balsam being entirely rubbed off, and several holes made in her bottom. The greatest difficulty was how to repair it, having no pitch or balsam left, and but little oakum, which was of no service without the former.

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After trying various methods, we at last gave it up as a thing impracticable, and began to turn our thoughts on some other means of getting out of this bleak and barren place, to search for an inhabited country. We therefore proposed to abandon our boat, and to traverse the ice till we could get into the woods, from which we were prevented, in our present situation, by the insurmountable precipices; but, could we gain the woods, how were we to pass them, as they were six feet deep in snow? At last, we came to a resolution of taking what provisions we had upon our backs the next day, and coasting along the ice, till we could discover some inhabitants. We computed, that we should be able to walk about ten miles a day, even in our present weak and reduced condition.

This scheme, however, proved abortive; for on the morning of the 24th, when we intended to set out, the whole sheet of ice, which the night before looked so firm, was demolished, or driven out to sea. Thus had we neither ice to walk on, nor boat to carry us through the water, nor even a possibility of moving from this place, where we were embayed, and surrounded by insurmountable precipices. Thus circumstanced, we were again obliged to turn our thoughts towards some scheme for repairing our boat, as upon that our only hope depended. We had plenty of oakum to stop up the holes and seams, but nothing to substitute in the room of pitch. Mr. Prenties at last thought of a plan, that

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of throwing water over the calum, and letting it freeze into a cake of ice. Though the men in general made light of this undertaking, and assisted with much reluctance, they were soon convinced of its happy consequences; for, in the course of the day, every seam and hole was frozen up in such a manner, that not a drop of water could enter, so long as the frost continued, and at present there was little appearance of its breaking.

The weather coming moderate, on the 27th of January, with a light breeze directly off the shore, we got our boat very carefully launched, and set off very early in the morning from this ill-omened bay. We put ashore about six o'clock in the evening upon a small sandy beach; we next cut some branches, and having made a fire, sheltered ourselves as well as possible in the wood. Our tinder being nearly consumed, Mr. Prenties, in order to furnish a fresh supply, cut away the back part of his shirt, which he had worn ever since he left the ship. A shower of rain the next day unfortunately melted all the ice off our boat. We were therefore prevented from going any further till a return of the frost, and our provisions were now reduced to two pounds and a half of beef for each man.

On the 29th the mate, wandering a little distance from the fire, discovered a partridge perched on the bough of a tree, which Mr. Prenties contrived means to ensnare. This we boiled in some melted snow, together with a little salt-water to give the broth a relish.

Having divided it, when dressed, into equal parts, and cast lots for the choice of each, we sat down to what we found a delicious meal, the only one, excepting the quart of cranberries, since we had been upon the island. The frost again setting in we took the advantage to stop the boat's leak as before, and then put to sea. At night we put into a sandy beach, in the neighbourhood of a thick wood, which afforded us a tolerable shelter.

The next day, the weather being still favourable, we launched our boat early in the morning, in order to get before night as far as possible on our journey; but we had not proceeded above six miles, before the wind shifting, obliged us to put on shore, and haul up our boat. A heavy fall of rain, which continued the whole day, rendered our situation extremely uncomfortable, and again melted the icy calking of our boat.

On the first of February, the wind coming round to the N. W. and bringing the frost along with it, we were once more enabled to repair our boat, and prepare for launching it. This done, we immediately embarked, and pursued our coasting voyage; but the severity of the cold having formed a quantity of ice it was with extreme labour that we contrived to get five miles before night, one of our party being employed in breaking the ice with a pole, and clearing it from the bow of the boat.

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The wind prevented our proceeding any further till the 3d, when it became favourable, and, after having run at the rate of about four or five miles an hour, we discovered an exceeding high land, with several other mountains and large bays between us; and we were in hopes, if the wind should not increase too much, that we should be able to reach it before night. On comparing circumstances, we concluded that the island must be that of St. Paul, and the high land the north point of Cape Breton. The prodigious height of the land led us into an erroneous computation of its distance; for, though we had supposed, that we were within three leagues of it when we first discovered the island of St. Paul, we found, before we reached it, that we had run near five leagues. Here we were again in danger of being blown out to sea. Finding no place at the North Cape where we could land during the night, we were obliged to continue rowing till the morning; when, being overcome with the fatigue, we were compelled to attempt a landing, which we accomplished with more ease than we expected.

As soon as we were landed, our first care was to haul up our boat, that she might meet with no further damage from the sea. We then got into the woods, which lay close to the shore; and, as Mr. Prenties had taken the precaution to put our tinder-box in his bosom before we landed, to preserve it from the water, we contrived to kindle a fire, a

refreshment we had much occasion for, having got wet in landing, and being in so weak and reduced a condition, that it was with the greatest difficulty we could keep ourselves awake for a few minutes when before the fire; so that we were under the necessity of watching in turn, lest, all being asleep together, the fire should go out, and we should be frozen to death.

By this time, our provisions were entirely consumed, and not having the most distant prospect of getting any more, we were ready to abandon ourselves to despair. Having weighed the necessity of the case, and the misery of perishing by hunger, we were of opinion, that it would be adviseable to sacrifice one for the preservation of the rest; and that the most proper method would be by casting lots, which should be the unfortunate victim. But this shocking resolution we agreed to put off to the last extremity. We could not avoid cursing our destiny, that we should be cast away on so barren and miserable a country, and in such an unlucky time of the year, when we were not only deprived of the relief we might have gotten, at any other season, from the natural productions of the earth; but now even the animals, inhabitants of both elements, had retired to their holes and hiding-places, to shield themselves from the intense cold, which prevails during the winter in this inhospitable climate. All we could collect was about two quarts of hips, or wild rose-buds, which we found by throwing

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for, having up the snow, and searching in different parts of the banks.

Having in some degree allayed the keen sense of hunger with this sorry food, and the wind having become somewhat more moderate, we got into our boat, and pushed off, the day being already drawing towards a conclusion. Our progress, however, was soon impeded by the quantity of ice that floated on the water, which obliged us to put ashore on another part of the same beach. In landing, Mr. Prenties had the misfortune to let the tinder-box fall from his bosom into the water, by which means we were unable to kindle a fire; and being exceedingly wet, as was generally the case when we landed, we were in this place in a most uncomfortable situation, and suffered much from the cold. We therefore thought it best to get into our boat as fast as possible, and return to the spot from whence we came, in hopes of finding some fire still remaining. On our arrival at the place, which was accompanied with great difficulty, we had the satisfaction to find that the fire was not totally extinguished. Had that been the case, we must have perished in the course of the night. The fire being repaired, Mr. Prenties cut up another part of his shirt to make more tinder; and, as the former accident had like to have proved so fatal to us, he was resolved to be more careful of it for the future.

About ten o'clock in the morning of the 8th of February we left this place, and proceeded

ceeded on our voyage; and on landing, in the evening, we had the misfortune to lose two of our oars, which were washed overboard by the surf. The following day's rowing was a hard business, considering our weak condition; for having been a length of time without taking any kind of nourishment, we were so much reduced in strength, that, when we got on shore, we could scarce walk for fifty yards together.

On the 11th, the weather being unfavourable, we were obliged to remain the whole day on shore; and during that time we were fortunate enough to find a few rose-buds, which at present we esteemed a great delicacy. We thought ourselves extremely unlucky in not having found, in the course of our wanderings, so much as the body of any dead animals.

The wind became more moderate on the 12th, and we proceeded once more on our voyage. Next day the weather got milder, with a fall of rain; so that it was with difficulty we could get our boat to swim, the ice thawing gradually at the bottom. This obliged us to put on shore long before night; and when we had landed and made a fire, we found no other immediate want but that of provisions, having consumed all the hips or rose-buds we had gathered at our last landing-place. Being now driven to the last extremity, we were obliged to sacrifice the prospect of travelling any further to the immediate preservation of our lives. About a dozen

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zen tallow candles remained, the rest we had hitherto employed in stopping the leaks of our boat, as fast as she sprung one in any particular place. Of these we divided a small part among us, which gave us some relief for the present. The two following days, we coasted for a few miles, searching for a place where we could meet with some hips; but our search proved ineffectual. This was the only kind of food we could now expect; and had we discovered any place that abounded with them, it was our intention to draw up the boat there, and remain till they were consumed.

On the 17th we made another division of a part of the tallow-candles that yet remained; and the following day, we proceeded about five miles, when we landed on a fine flat country. We were now so much debilitated, that we knew it would be impossible for us to go much further. We therefore determined to perish on this place, unless any unexpected accident should bring us relief. Having cut some small branches of pine to lie upon, together with some larger to serve for a shelter, we made our fire. We then all went in search of hips, and had the good fortune to find about a pint of them, which, boiled up with a couple of tallow-candles, afforded us a tolerable meal.

The whole of the day of the 19th was employed in search of hips, but it was not attended with any success. Our tallow-candles were therefore the only resources we had left,

and by this time they were reduced to two. We found ourselves so much weakened the following day, that we could make no further use of our axe, and we were under the necessity of creeping about in our tunas, to gather for our fire the rotten branches of trees that lay scattered upon the ground. As we had not a proper quantity of fuel, the fire that we kept up was but just sufficient to preserve us from freezing. Having now no more than two tallow-candles remaining, and having no hopes of procuring any more hips, we thought we might derive some degree of nourishment from the kelp-weed, of which there was a quantity lying on the shore. We accordingly collected a little of it, and with melted snow boiled it a few hours in a kettle; but, at the conclusion, we found it but little tenderer than at first. We then melted one of our tallow-candles in the liquor, and having supped it up, and eat some of the weed, our appetite became somewhat satiated; but we were all, soon afterwards, seized with violent vomitings.

On the 22d we made use of some more kelp-weed and our last tallow-candle. Having for three days tasted no other food than the kelp-weed, we began to swell to an alarming degree; and, in a few days afterwards, the swelling encreased to such a degree all over our bodies, that, notwithstanding the little flesh we had upon our bones, we could sink our fingers two inches deep in the skin, the impression of which remained visible for above an hour after. We passed a few days
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more in this miserable mannner, at the expi-
ration of which we were so much swollen, as
to be almost deprived of our sight, and so re-
duced in strength, that it was with the utmost
difficulty we could keep our fire in by crawl-
ing about in turn, and breaking the rotten
branches that lay scattered on the snow.

The time was now arrived, when it became
highly expedient for one to fall a sacrifice for
the preservation of the rest; but some were
averse to such a measure, and, even wretched
as their situation was, fearful of the lot falling
on themselves. However, though they ob-
jected to the proposal of casting lots which
should be the victim, yet all concurred in the
necessity of some one being sacrificed for the
preservation of the rest. The only question
was how it should be determined; when, by
a kind of reasoning more agreeable to the
dictates of self-love than of justice, it was
agreed on, that, as the captain was now so
exceedingly reduced, as to be the first who
would sink under our present complicated
misery: as he had been the person, to whom
we considered ourselves in some measure in-
debted for all our misfortunes; and further,
as he had, ever since our shipwreck, been the
most selfish, and the most remiss in his exer-
tions towards the general good, he was un-
doubtedly the first person who ought to be sa-
crificed. Add to this, after our shipwreck,
Mr. Prenties had discovered, by some papers
that had been washed on shore, that, though
the captain's pretended destination was to

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New York, yet his real one was to the West Indies, if he could possibly effect it. Thus would he have baffled Gen. Haldimand's intentions, in sending Mr. Prenties with dispatches that might be of the first consequence to this country. The determination now made was kept secret from the captain; and it would have been impossible for us to live many days without putting it into execution, had we not happily met with relief from a quarter whence we little expected it.

On the 18th of February, as we were all lying about our fire, we thought that we heard the sound of human voices in the woods, and soon after discovered two Indians, with guns in their hands, who did not seem yet to have perceived us. This sight gave us fresh strength and spirits, and, getting up, we advanced towards them with the greatest eagerness imaginable. As soon as we were perceived by the Indians, they started back, and seemed fixed for a few moments to the ground with surprise and horror. This indeed was not to be wondered at, when it is considered, that, besides the amazement they must naturally have felt on suddenly meeting white men in this uninhabited part of the island, our appearance itself was enough to alarm the most intrepid; our clothes being almost entirely burnt off, so that we were bare in several parts of our bodies, our limbs swollen to a prodigious bulk, our eyes from the same cause almost invisible, and our hair in a confused and dishevelled state about our heads
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and shoulders, particularly of those who wore it long, we not having been able to comb it since our shipwreck. As we advanced towards the Indians, some of us wept, while others laughed with joy. Being a little recovered from their surprise, they did not show much inclination to accost us, till Mr. Prenties got up to one of them, and took him by the hand, when he shook it some time very heartily, which is the usual mode of salutation among the Indians, and began at length to shew marks of compassion at our distressed appearance.

The Indians then walked with us to our fire, and, sitting down by it together, one of them, who could speak a little broken French, desired we would inform him whence we came, and the particulars of the accident that brought us there. Mr. Prenties accordingly gave him as concise an account as possible of the disasters and fatigues we had undergone; and during the relation he seemed to be very much affected at our sufferings. Mr. Prenties, having finished his narration, asked the Indian if he could furnish us with any kind of provisions, to which he answered in the affirmative. Observing that we had very little fire, he suddenly started up, and took our axe in his hand; when looking at it, and laughing heartily, we supposed at the badness of it, he threw it down again, and taking his tomahawk from his side, which is a small hatchet that the Indians always carry about them, he went, and in a short time cut a
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quantity of food, which he brought and threw upon our fire. This done, he took up his gun, and, without saying a word, went off with his companion.

Three hours having elapsed since the departure of the Indians, during which interval some of our party were not without anxiety lest they should never return, we perceived them coming round the point, at a small distance, in a bark canoe. Being arrived and landed upon the beach, they took out of their canoe some smoked venison, and a bladder of seal oil, which they brought up to our fireplace. Having put some of the meat into the kettle, we boiled it in melted snow, and gave each of us a very small quantity of it, together with some oil. We very well knew their reason for being so sparing of their meat; for eating a quantity of gross food in our present state might be attended with the most fatal consequences. It gave us no little pleasure to see the Indians so careful of us. This light repast being ended, the Indians desired three of us to embark in their canoe, that being all she could carry at a time, and proceed from this place to their hut, which lay five miles farther by water, and about a mile from the shore, in the middle of woods. We were received at the sea-side by three other Indians, and about twelve or fourteen women and children, who had been there waiting our arrival. Having landed from the canoe, we were conducted by these last to their habitation in the wood, which consisted of three huts

ought and huts or wigwams, there being that number
 took up of families among them. In the mean time,
 wordy went the same two Indians who brought us, went
 back in their canoes for the three remaining
 men of our party.

On arriving at the hut, we were treated
 with the greatest humanity by these people :
 they gave us some broth to sup, but would
 not suffer us to eat meat, nor any kind of sub-
 stantial food whatever. Mr. Prenties was de-
 sired, at the request of an old woman, who
 appeared to be mistress or mother of the fa-
 mily present, to give them an account of our
 transactions since the day of our shipwreck.
 He accordingly gave a more particular account
 than he had done before in French to the In-
 dian already mentioned, and he explained it
 in his own language to the Indians. In the
 course of his relation, we could perceive, that
 the old woman was exceedingly affected at
 certain parts of it, which gave us great satis-
 faction, as we from thence derived hopes that
 they would continue to treat us with the same
 humanity.

The Indians did every thing in their power
 to reduce the swelling of our limbs, which
 they accomplished after much difficulty.
 Having provided for our own immediate
 wants, our thoughts recurred to those un-
 fortunate men whom we had left by the
 wreck ; and we were under much anxiety for
 them, lest by this time they might have pe-
 rished with hunger. From the description we
 gave the Indians of the situation of the river,
 Vol. VIII. E and

and of a small island that lay nearly opposite, they said, that they knew the place perfectly well; that it was above one hundred miles distant, through very difficult paths, over rivers and mountains; and that, if they undertook the journey, they must expect some compensation for their trouble. This indeed was but reasonable; for it could not be expected, that the Indians should leave their hunting, by which alone they subsisted their wives and families, to undergo a fatigue of that kind through pure benevolence; and as to their account of the distance, we could easily give credit to it, as we knew we had come above one hundred and fifty miles by water. Mr. Prenties informed them, that he had some money, and that, if it would be any object to them, he would pay them for their trouble. They seemed much pleased when they found we had money, and desired to look at it. Mr. Prenties, then taken the purse from his servant, shewed them the hundred and eighty guineas it contained; and observing an eagerness in their countenances at the sight of the coin, which we little expected among Indians, and that the women in particular seemed to have a strong fancy to it, he presented them with a guinea each; for which they expressed their satisfaction by laughing, the only method among them of displaying every sentiment of that nature, as they seldom speak much, but where there is an absolute occasion for it.

Mr. Prenties then made an agreement with the Indians, that they should set off the next day, which was the 2d of March, and that they should receive twenty-five guineas at their departure, and the same sum on their return. This being adjusted, they immediately began making the necessary preparations, and three of them, having received the sum of money agreed for, went off the next morning.

Our situation among these people, as soon as they found we had money, was not near so comfortable as before; for they then became as mercenary as they had before been charitable, and exacted above ten times the value for every little necessary with which they supplied us. Besides which, we were under some apprehension lest they should be excited, by this extraordinary passion for money, to plunder us, and leave us in the same destitute condition in which they found us. The only circumstance on which we founded our hope of better treatment from them was their religion; for they were Christians, and rigid Catholics, having been converted by the French before we got possession of the island.

The Indians, after being absent near a fortnight, arrived with three men, who were the only survivors of the eight we had left behind at the hut. They were in a very miserable and reduced condition, and upon enquiry we found, that, after we left them, having consumed all the beef, they lived for some days

on the skin of the moose-deer, which we had left entire, not thinking it worth while to make a partition of it. This being consumed, three of them died of hunger in a few days, and the others were under the necessity of subsisting on the flesh of the dead men, till they were relieved by the Indians. One of the remaining five was so imprudently ravenous, when the Indians came to their assistance, as to eat such a quantity of meat, that he expired in a few hours, in the greatest agonies imaginable, and another soon after accidentally shot himself with one of the Indians guns. Thus was our number, which originally consisted of nineteen persons, reduced to nine. Indeed, it is rather a wonder, how so many persons could, for the space of three months, go through such complicated distresses, from excessive cold, hunger, and fatigue.

We all remained another fortnight among the Indians; by which time our healths being somewhat re-established, and Mr. Prenties's money very much reduced, he made an agreement with the Indians to conduct him to Halifax, for which he agreed to pay forty-five pounds, and to furnish them with provisions, and all necessaries, at every inhabited place on their way. It was then agreed on, that Mr. Prenties and his servant should set off on the second of April for Halifax, accompanied by two Indians, and Mr. Winslow, a young gentleman, who had been a passenger
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on board the vessel, and was one of the three survivors at the hut. The Indians were to conduct the remainder of our party to a settlement on Spanish River, where they were to remain till the spring, when an opportunity might offer for them to get to Halifax by sea.

We accordingly set off on the day appointed, and, after sustaining a most fatiguing and dangerous journey, sometimes by land, and sometimes by water, we arrived at Halifax on the 8th of May. Here the Indians remained a few days, when, having received the balance due to them, they took their departure for the island. Mr. Prenties was obliged to continue here two months, till an opportunity offered of a passage, in the Royal Oak, to New York, where he delivered his dispatches, in a very ragged condition, to Sir Henry Clinton.

The rest of our fellow-sufferers in the shipwreck soon after arrived at Halifax in a shallop from Spanish River. The captain, conscious of the reception he should meet with, did not think proper to go to his owner at New York, to give an account of the loss of his vessel; but took his passage in a ship from Halifax to London, and now serves as a pilot on the Thames. The mate was, on account of his good conduct during the whole of the transactions, appointed, by a gentleman in Halifax, to the command of a ship bound to the West Indies. As to Mr. Prenties, on

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his arrival in England, and laying before the
ministry a representation of his sufferings and
losses, they in a great measure made good
the latter, after the truth of the relation had
been certified by Lord Dalrymple, aide-de-
camp to Sir Henry Clinton, in America, at
the time Mr. Prenties delivered his dispatches.

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MR. ELLIS'S VOYAGE

TO THE

Northern Frozen Ocean.

THE knowledge of the frozen seas about the North Pole, was owing to a project for the discovery of a north-west passage to China. So early as the year 1576 this noble design was conceived, it has often been revived, it is not yet completed, but has never been wholly despaired of by those, whose knowledge and spirit make them competent judges and lovers of such undertakings.

Forbisher only discovered the main of New Britain, or Terra de Labrador, and those straits to which he has given his name. In 1585, John David sailed from Dartmouth, and viewed that and the more northerly coasts; but he seems never to have entered the bay. Hudson made three voyages on the same adventure, the first in 1607, the second in 1608, and his third and last in 1610. This bold and judicious navigator entered the straits that led

into this new Mediterranean, coasted a great part of it, and penetrated to 80 deg. 23 min. into the heart of the frozen zone. His ardour for the discovery not being abated by the difficulties he struggled with in this empire of winter and world of frost and snow, he stayed here until the ensuing spring, and prepared, in the beginning of 1611, to pursue his discoveries; but his crew, who suffered equal hardships without the same spirit to support them, mutinied, seized upon him and seven of those who were most faithful to him, and committed them to the fury of the seas in an open boat. Hudson and his companions were either swallowed up by the waves, or, gaining the inhospitable coast they water, were destroyed by the savages; but his calamitous fate cannot so much discourage an undaunted mind from such undertakings, as the immortality of his name, which he has secured by having given it to so great a sea, will be a spur to others to expect an equal honour.

From the first voyage of Frobisher to that of Capt. Ellis, containing an interval of one hundred and ten years, notwithstanding so many disappointments, the rational hopes of this grand discovery grew greater by every attempt, and seemed to spring out of our very failures. The greater swell of the tides in the inner part of the bay than near the straits, an appearance so unknown in any other inland seas, and the encrease of this swell with westerly winds, seemed, without any other arguments, to evince the certain existence of
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such a passage as we have so long sought for without success.

There is something so agreeably entertaining, and at the same time there are so many objects worthy the attention of the curious reader, in the expedition of Mr. Ellis to the North Seas, that we shall be particular in our account of it.

Two ships were purchased by a committee appointed to manage the preparations for this important voyage. One of these was an hundred and eighty tons burthen, called the Dobbs galley; and the other, of one hundred and forty tons, called the California. These vessels were perfectly well repaired and strengthened, and in all respects fitted as well as could be desired, for the voyage they were intended to make. They had also put on board a sufficient quantity of provisions, military and naval stores, with such goods as were fit for presents to the inhabitants of the countries that might be discovered, and as good in their respective kinds as it was possible to procure.

Mr. Ellis was appointed to go this voyage in quality of agent for the committee, without being obliged to do any duty, or subject to any command, but what were imposed upon him by the instructions of the committee. His principal instructions were, that he should make exact draughts of all the new-discovered countries, the bearings and distances of headlands; that he should mark the rocks and shoals on the coast, and assist in the material busi-

business of determining the several circumstances attending tides ; as also to examine the saltness of the water, to observe the variation of the compass, to take notice of the different natures of the soil, and to collect, to the utmost of his power, metals, minerals, and all kinds of natural curiosities.

The ships, being thus prepared for this expedition, fell down from Gravesend to the Hope on the 20th of May, 1746, and lay there four days ; but, in the mean time, the vessels in the service of the Hudson's Bay company, and his majesty's ship the Loo, of forty guns, intended for the convoy, were sailed for the Nore, where they soon followed them. On the 31st the commodore made a signal to weigh, which was accordingly done by the whole fleet.

On the 18th of June, these two vessels left company with the Hudson's Bay ships, which were the last they saw for that year. The Dobbs and the California being now left by themselves, signals were proposed and agreed on, for the better keeping company, which proved, in the course of the voyage, very useful in that respect.

Nothing particular occurred, but the common circumstances of the wind and weather, till the 21st at night, when a terrible fire broke out in the great cabin of the Dobbs, and quickly made its progress to the powder-room, which was directly underneath it, and where there was no less than thirty or forty barrels of powder, besides candles, spirits, matches,

matches, and all manner of combustibles. It is impossible to express the confusion and consternation this accident occasioned. The dangerous place the fire was in, gave every one on board the greatest reason to expect every moment would be their last. On this occasion were heard all the variety of sea eloquence, cries, prayers, curses, and scolding, mingled together; yet this did not prevent proper measures being taken to save the ship and the lives of the crew. Water in great abundance was passed along and properly applied, and all other methods used by those, who, in spite of these disturbances, still preserved their reason. As to the crew in general, their apprehensions suggested to them a variety of expedients, which, without weighing or considering, they one moment endeavoured to execute, and the next abandoned through distraction and despair. At length, however, the fire was happily extinguished, and with it their dreadful fears and apprehensions.

On the 27th they fell in with great quantities of low ice, in latitude 58 deg. 32 min. to the eastward of Cape Farewell in Greenland, which obliged them to stand to the southward. For some time after this, they sailed through abundance of drift wood; but from whence this wood came is still a matter of great uncertainty.

On the 5th of July, they began to fall in with those mountains of ice, which are always met with near Hudson's Straits. This mountainous ice is of a prodigious size; and

Mr. Ellis confirmed, what other navigators had before asserted, that some of it is five or six hundred yards thick. On the 8th they made the islands of Resolution, at the distance of about half a mile. It was owing to the fogginess of the weather that they did not see them sooner, and it was happy for them that it cleared as it did; for had those fogs continued but a little longer, probably they would have gone on shore, and their vessels been broken to pieces on the rocks. Even as it was, they cleared but with great difficulty; for the wind falling, and the sea rumbling in on the shore, they were forced to have recourse to the ships oars, and by the help of these, and the boats towing a-head, they made shift to deliver themselves from this danger. In their passage from thence to the Upper Savage Islands, they met with little ice to obstruct them. At these islands, there came on board them three large and twenty-six small canoes full of Esquimaux Indians, with whom they exchanged saws, hatchets, gimblets, &c. for whale-bone and seal-skins. On the 17th, the ice being very thick about them, they made fast to a very large piece of it, with several ice anchors and ropes. Here the crews of both vessels filled their empty casks with fresh water, out of ponds which are commonly found upon the ice, without the trouble of breaking the ice, and melting it in coppers.

On the 10th of August, after having touched at some few islands, as the weather began

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began to set in severe, they came to a resolution of seeking some place for winter-quarters; and, after debating it in council, they bore away for Port Nelson in Hudson's Bay. On the 26th they arrived at the mouth of the southern branch, or Hayes's River, where the Dobbs went a-ground, and had like to have been lost. The governor of this place, which belonged to our Hudson's Bay company, not only refused them all kinds of assistance, but used every means possible for their destruction. He ordered the beacon to be cut down, which was the only proper mark they had to guide them into a place of safety. Not contented with this, as he found the adventurers were determined to winter there, he sent most of the Indians, whose chief business is to kill deer, geese, &c. into the country, on purpose that they might not make use of them that way, or be in any manner benefited by their means.

They spent their time, till the 11th of September, in lightening and preparing the ships for their quarters. On the 12th they ran a-breast the fort, anchored there, and landed the remainder of their provisions and stores. Here they dug a hole twelve feet deep, to bury their strong and small beer in, to preserve it from the frost. It was the 26th, notwithstanding all the diligence they could use, before the ships were secured in the creek. This being effected, they turned their thoughts on the methods necessary for their own preservation, being certain, that the severity of

the cold would render it impossible for them to live on board their ships. Some of the people were employed in cutting fire-wood, and others in building log tents. These were made of trees hewn and cut, about sixteen feet long, raised close together, their ends lying one against another at the top, but extending at the bottom, in the form of the roof of a country-house. The vacancies between these logs were stuffed with moss, and that being plaistered over with clay, made a warm hut. The door was low and small, a fire-place in the middle, and a hole over it to let out the smoak. Other huts, of a taste somewhat more elegant, and in a more pleasant situation, were erected for the officers.

On the 5th of October, they had much ice in the creek, and by the 8th it was fast frozen. Until the 30th they had snow, frosts, and moderate weather alternately, and on the 31st, Hayes's River was frozen quite hard: so that now they had some experience of what was to be expected from a Hudson's Bay winter.

On the 2d of November, they could not keep the ink from freezing at the fire, and the next day they discovered all the bottled beer to be frozen solid, though packed up in tow, and near a good fire. On the 6th, the cold became insupportable abroad, so that the sailors were distributed among the several tents, which were consigned for their preservation and conveniency in the woods, and the officers retired to their more elegant situation.

ation. They began about this time to put on their winter dress, which consisted of a robe of beaver-skin, with the fur on, and which reached to their heels. They had two waistcoats under it; a cap and mittens of the same, lined with flannel; a pair of Indian stockings over their yarn ones, made of broad cloth or leather, which reached up to the middle of the thigh; with shoes of soft tanned moose or elk-skin, under which they wore two or three pair of blanket or thick duffil socks, to prevent their feet from freezing; a pair of snowshoes about five feet long, and eighteen inches broad, to hinder them from sinking in the snow, completed their dress. Nothing could be better contrived than the garb, both for convenience and use; for, when they were thus equipped, they were able to stand the keenest cold, except only a few days that happened during the winter.

As in every country, different seasons produce, or rather direct men to different employments, so in this their utmost skill was shewn, and industry exerted, in killing rabbits and partridges, which was the chief game to be met with at this season. The manner in which they caught the rabbits was as follows. They cut down several bushy trees; with these they made a hedge two feet high, and of what length they pleased, leaving at every twenty yards distance small holes for the rabbits to run through, they never attempting to jump over. In these were set snares of wire, the ends of which were made fast to the

end of a pole that lay over a crutch, in such a manner, that when the rabbits entered, and began to struggle, the pole kicked up, and hung them two or three feet off the ground. This circumstance had a double conveniency, as it secured the game they wanted, and by their being thus suspended, protected them when taken from being devoured by other animals. They have no other method of killing the partridges at these factories than shooting them, and in this they are very successful, they being there in very great plenty, insomuch that one man has been known to kill sixty or eighty in a day's time, which makes a good article in the magazine list of winter provisions.

As November set in with keen frosts, so they continued through the whole of that month, without any other alteration, than that of freezing more or less, as the wind changed. When the wind was westerly or southerly, the cold was supportable; but as it changed to the north-west or north, it became immediately excessively keen, and often attended with a sort of snow no longer than so many grains of sand, which drifted with the wind in clouds, and rendered it very dangerous to be far from home.

It was their custom to put a horse-load of wood, at least, at a time into their stove, which was built of brick, six feet long, two wide, and three high. When the wood was near burnt, the embers were beat off, the brands thrown out, and the top of the chimney

ney stopped, which occasioned a sulphureous and suffocating smell, and so great a heat, that, notwithstanding the rigour of the climate, it frequently threw them into a sweat. The difference was so great between the heat within and cold without, that such as had been exposed to the severity of the cold without doors, very often fainted on entering the house, and remained for some time in a kind of helpless condition. If a door or window were but opened, the cold air rushed in with such fury, as turned the enclosed vapours into small snow; nor was all the heat they could raise sufficient to keep their windows, the cieling, or sides of the house, clear from snow and ice. Such bed-cloaths as touched the walls were generally frozen fast to them by morning, and their breaths settled in a white hoar-frost upon the blankets. As soon as the house cooled, the sap, that was thawed in the timber with the heat, froze, splitting it with cracks little inferior in noise to the report of a musquet. No liquid could withstand the cold, if exposed to it; strong brine, brandy, and even spirits of wine, froze; but the latter not into a solid mass, but to the consistence of oil, and even this when the weather was between temperate and severe. All the liquors, under the proof of common spirits, froze to a state perfectly solid, and burst the vessels that contained them, whether of wood, tin, or even copper.

The ice in the rivers about them was above eight feet thick, and the snow three deep, but

considerably more where it drifted. Whatever fresh provisions they could procure, as deer's flesh, rabbits, partridges, pheasants, fish, &c. kept sweet as long as they pleased, without deriving any assistance from salt; for they are no sooner killed than they are frozen, and remain so from October to April, when they begin to thaw, and consequently grow moist and spoiled.

Several of the sailors had their ears, faces, and toes frozen, but not dangerously. While the flesh was in that state, it was white and hard like ice; but by rubbing the part with a warm hand, or, what was found better, with a beaver mitten, it soon thawed, and this accident was attended with no worse consequence than leaving a blister behind.

In this climate, if any one touch iron, or any other smooth solid surface in the winter, their fingers will be frozen fast to it. If in drinking a dram of brandy out of a glass, the tongue or lips touch it, in pulling them away, the skin will be left upon it. Mr. Ellis mentions an odd instance of this kind happening to one of his people, who was carrying a bottle of spirits from the house to his tent. Having no cork to stop the bottle, he made use of his finger, which was frozen fast, and he was obliged to lose part of it to make a cure practicable. All solid bodies, such as glass, iron, &c. acquire a degree of cold so very intense, that they resist the effects, even of a strong heat, and that for a considerable time.

On examining the liquor that was frozen, in the center of it, a small part of the spirituous liquid remained fluid, which contained a greater degree of strength than when the whole was fluid; but the frozen part, when melted, tasted insipid. Other casks were not burst, or their contents above half congealed. The watery parts of these having time to thaw and mix with the spirituous, the whole, when they came to drink it, proved very good, and some even fancied it better than if it had never been frozen.

From this long account of the severity of their winters, it will be natural for any reader to conclude, that the country is the most uncomfortable in the world, and its inhabitants the most unhappy; but, in fact, they are very much the reverse. If the weather be cold, they have abundance of beaver shirts to clothe them, and many other conveniences, which put them at least on a level with those who live in a milder climate. "But what in this respect will appear much more extraordinary, (says Mr. Ellis) I dare assert, that people from Europe, who have lived here many years, prefer it to all other places; and when they leave it, and come home with the ships, they grow tired, in a few months, of a more moderate climate, and wish with impatience for the proper season, that may give them an opportunity of revisiting those frozen regions."

The whole month of January wore the settled face of winter; for, though the weather

ther was sometimes dark and tempestuous, with vast drifts of snow, and at other times pretty clear, yet the frost was constant and intense.

In the month of March, they had specimens of every kind of weather. Sometimes it was not only temperate, but in some degree warm, and at others cold again as ever; but for the most part moderate and pleasant. By this time also the plains were covered, and the rivers filled with water, so that they now began to think of putting men and officers on board their ships, in order to prepare for pursuing their discoveries.

April opened in such a manner as freed them from the terrors they had been under for the safety of their ships, should a sudden thaw have ensued. On the 13th of this month they buried one of their men, who had been a great drinker of drams, so that the scurvy, which had raged among them, though with little fatality, would not spare him. The ground was so hard frozen, that it was, generally speaking, three or four days' work to sink a grave; but when the corpse were once laid in it, they would remain safe and uncorrupt, unless some great alteration should happen in the climate, to the end of the world. On the 18th the weather began to mend, and the wind coming about to the south, they had a gentle shower of rain: a thing they had not seen for six months before, and therefore the more welcome. The fowls too, after an absence

absence of seven months, began to visit them. They had likewise a great flight of small birds, most of which were of a dark and unpleasing colour; but the sweetness of their notes sufficiently compensated whatever was amiss in their plumage, and made their company equally harmonious and agreeable.

About the 6th of May, the warm weather returned again, and the creek, where the ships lay, was quite clear of ice, that wore away imperceptibly, though the river continued to be still hard frozen, which drove the fish into the creek, where they caught plenty of them with their nets. On the 16th the ice in the channels of Hayes's River gave way, and floated down gently with the stream. The sailors were all this time constantly employed in making the ships fit to go down the river; and accordingly, on the 29th, by the help of a very high tide, occasioned by a north-west wind, they warped to the very mouth of the creek, and lay there until the 2d of June.

On the 9th of June, their ships got down the river as far as the factory, where they took in their naval stores, provisions, &c. in order to put to sea, and prosecute the discovery on which they were sent. On the 24th, having a fair wind, they weighed anchor, and passing the shoals, stood to the northward on the discovery. The next day, they sailed through much broken ice, till they got to the northward of Cape Churchill, where they had a clear

clear sea, and proceeded without difficulty, till the last day of the month, when they made Centry Island, in 61 deg. 40 min. north latitude.

The Eskimaux, who inhabit the sea-coasts to the northward of the company's settlements, appeared from time to time in small bodies of forty or fifty together, upon the eminences of the islands of that shore, shouting, and making signals for them to approach; but they proceeded on their course without minding them, until they arrived at Knight's Island, in 62 deg. 2 min. north latitude.

On the 5th of June, they stood over to the south side of Sir Biby's Island, in hopes that they should have been able to enter the opening; but the ice driving out and in, in very large pieces, they were obliged to desist. They then stood to the northward as far as 62 deg. 12 min. On the 8th they sailed with an intention to coast to the northward; but in repassing the shoals, the tide swept them upon a ridge of shoals, where their vessel was very near being stove to pieces. However, by the friendly assistance of the Indians, it was got off without suffering any injury. It must here be observed, that this vessel was neither the Dobbs nor the California, but a small one they had built while at Hudson's Bay, for the purpose of coasting.

On the 9th of July, they arrived at Sea-Horse Island, which is very properly named, there

there being a prodigious resort of those creatures at that place; and the time in which our adventurers were there being the season of propagation, they were excessively furious, roaring in a terrible manner, many of them flouncing about the beach, and much greater numbers in the sea that washes its coast.

Having spent some time in coasting in this little vessel, they resolved to return again to the ships, which they joined on the 13th of July, and then proceeded on discoveries in concert. As a mere journal of voyages, without some enlivening circumstances, though useful in the highest degree to mariners, affords very little amusement or instruction to readers who never traverse the boundless ocean, we shall draw this account to a speedy conclusion, by observing, that Wager Strait, which lies in the latitude of 65 deg. 33 min. appears to be the highest latitude Mr. Ellis gained. Being stopped here by the ice, in the beginning of September, they resolved to sail for England, and arrived safe in Yarmouth roads on the 14th of October, after an absence of one year, four months, and seventeen days. Thus the great design of finding a north-west passage failed; but with no discredit, either to those who planned the expedition, or to those who were entrusted with the execution of it. Such great designs, even in their failure, bestow a sufficient reward for whatever may have been expended upon them.

Having

Having given a particular account of Hudson's Bay, and the British Eſkimaux, in the fourth volume of the Polite Traveller, we beg leave to refer our readers to that volume for ſatisfaction in thoſe intereſting particulars.

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Captain Wood's Voyage

IN SEARCH OF A

NORTH-EAST PASSAGE.

IN the interval between the voyages of Fro-
bisher and that of Capt. Ellis, (see p. 52)
the following voyage was performed by Capt.
Wood. This able and enterprising navigator,
being himself an excellent mathematician
and geographer, and reading in the Philoso-
phical Transactions a paper, by which the
existence of a north-east passage to the eastern
or Indian ocean was plausibly asserted, and
this exactly coinciding with his own notions
of the construction of the globe, he was in-
duced, by these and other reasons, to apply
to King Charles the Second for a commission
to prosecute the discovery; the accomplish-
ment whereof, it was said, would add to the
glory of his majesty's reign, and immensely
to the wealth and prosperity of his kingdoms.
Many about the court of that needy prince,
hoping to share in the profits of the voyage,
were earnest in prevailing with the king to for-
ward the design, who being himself fond of

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novelty,

novelty, ordered the Speedwell frigate to be fitted out at his own charge, manned, victualled, and provided with every necessary; while the duke, his brother, and seven other courtiers, joined in the purchase of a pink of one hundred tons, to accompany her, which they likewise manned and victualled, and furnished with merchandizes, such as were thought marketable on the coasts of Tartary or Japan, which places it was supposed, after their passage through the North Sea, they would most probably fall in with.

Every thing being now in readiness, and the ships being commissioned, Capt. Wood being appointed to direct the expedition on board the Speedwell, and Capt. Hawes to bear him company on board the Prosperous, on the 28th of May, 1676, they sailed from the Buoy of the Nore, with the wind at south-west; and on the 4th of June cast anchor off Lerwick, in Brasley-Sound, where they continued six days, to recruit their stores and take in water. On the 10th they weighed anchor, and continued their voyage. On the 15th they entered the Polar circle, where the sun at that season of the year never sets. At noon the Speedwell broke her main-top-sail yard in the slings, which was the first disaster that had happened; but this, however, was easily repaired. The weather now began to grow hazy, a circumstance that frequently happens in the polar regions, darkening the air with the obscurity of night, which renders the

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navigation of these seas extremely disagreeable and dangerous.

They continued their course northward from this time till the 22d of June, when they fell in with the ice in latitude 75 deg. 59 min. without any thing material occurring. On that day at noon, they observed a continent of ice stretching to an imperceptible distance, in a direction from east-south-east, and west-north-west. They bore away along the ice till the 28th, when they found it join to the land of Nova Zembla. The next day, they stood away to the south, to get clear of the ice, but unfortunately found themselves embayed in it. At eleven at night, the Prosperous bore down upon the Speedwell, crying out, "ice upon the weather-bow." The Speedwell now clapt the helm hard a-weather, and veered out the main-sail to ware the ship; but, before she could be brought-to on the other tack, she struck on a ledge of rocks, and stuck fast. They fired guns of distress, but were not heard; and the fog was so thick, that land could not be discovered, though close to the stern of their ship. No relief was now to be expected, but from Providence and their own endeavours. In such a situation, no description can equal the relation of the captain himself, who, in the language of the times, gave the following full and pathetic account of it.

"Here (says he) we lay beating upon the rock in a most frightful manner, for the space of three or four hours, using all possible

means to save the ship, but in vain; for it blew so hard, that it was wholly out of our power to carry out an anchor capable to do us any service. At length, we saw land close under our stern, to the great amazement of us all, which before we could not see for the foggy weather. So I recommended the men to get out the boats before our masts came by the board, which was done. I sent the boatswain towards the shore in the pinnace, to see if there were any possibility of landing, which I feared, because the sea ran so high. In half an hour he returned with this answer, that it was impossible to land a man, as the snow being in high cliff, the shore was inaccessible. This was bad tidings; so that it was high time to think on the safety of our souls, and we went altogether to prayers, to beseech God to have mercy on us, for now nothing but inevitable ruin appeared before our eyes. After prayers, the weather cleared up a little, and looking over the stern, I saw a small beach directly with the stern of the ship, where I thought there might be some chance of getting on shore. I therefore sent off the pinnace a second time, with some men in her to be first landed; but she dared not venture to attempt the beach. I then ordered out the long-boat with twenty men to land, who attempted it, and got safe on shore. Those in the pinnace seeing that, followed, and landed their men likewise, and both vessels returned to the ship without any accident. The men on shore desired some fire-arms and
ammunition.

ammunition, for there were many bears in fight. I therefore ordered two barrels of powder, some small arms, some provisions, with my own papers and money, to be put on board the pinnace; but as she put off from the ship's side, a sea overfet her, so that all was lost, with the life of one man, and several others taken up for dead. The pinnace likewise was dashed to pieces, to our great sorrow, as by that disaster, our means of escaping from this dismal country, in case the Prosperous deserted us, was cut off. The long-boat being on board, and the sea running high, the boatswain and some others would compel me and the lieutenant to leave the ship, saying it was impossible for her to live long in that sea, and that they had rather be drowned than I; but desiring me, when I got on shore, if it were possible, to send the boat again for them. Before we got half way to the shore, the ship overfet; so making all possible haste to land the men we had on board, I went off to the ship again, to save those poor men who had been so kind to me before. With great hazard, I got to the quarter of the ship, and they came down the ladder into the boat; only one man was left behind, who had before been cast away in the pinnace, and was supposed to be dead. So I returned to the shore, though very wet and cold. We then hauled up the boat, and went up the land about a flight shot, where our men were making a fire, and a tent with canvass and oars, which we had saved for that purpose, in which we

all lay that night wet and weary. The next morning, the man we left on board having recovered, got upon the mizen-mast, and prayed to be taken on shore; but it blew so hard, and the sea ran so high, that, though he was a very pretty sailor, none would venture to bring him off.

“ The weather continuing blowing with extreme fogs, and with frost and snow, and all the ill-compacted weather that could be imagined put together, we built more tents to preserve ourselves; and the ship breaking in pieces, came all on shore to the same place where we landed, which served us for shelter and firing. Besides, there came to us some hogheads of flour, and brandy in good store, which was no little comfort in our great extremity. We now lay between hope and despair, praying for fair weather, that Capt. Hawes might find us, which it was impossible for him ever to do while the weather continued foggy; but fearing at the same time that he might be cast away as well as we.

“ But supposing we were never to see him again, I was resolved to try the utmost to save as many as I could in the long-boat. In order thereunto, we raised her two feet, and laid a deck upon her to keep out the sea as much as possible; and with this boat, and thirty men, for she would carry no more, I intended to row and sail to Russia; but the crew, not being satisfied who should be the men, began to be very unruly in their mind and behaviour, every one having as much
reason

reason to save himself as another; some holding consultation to save the boat, and all to run the like fortune. Here, however, brandy was our best friend; for it kept the men always foxed, so that in all their designs I could prevent them. Some were in the mind to go by land, but that I knew was impossible to any man; neither had we provisions, nor ammunition to defend us from the wild beasts. So that, the passage by land being impracticable, and no passage by sea to be attempted till forty men were destroyed, I will leave it to the consideration of any, whether we were not in 'a most deplorable condition, without the interposition of Divine Providence.

“ The weather continued still very bad, with fogs, snow, rain, and frost, till the ninth day of our being on shore, which was the 8th of July, when in the morning it cleared up, and to our great joy, one of our people cried out, ‘ a sail,’ which proved to be Capt. Hawes. So we set fire to our town, that he might see where we were, which he presently discovered; so came up, and sent his boat to us. Before I went off, I wrote a brief relation of the intention of the voyage, with the accident that had befallen us, and put it into a glass bottle, which I left in the fortification I had then built. So by twelve o'clock we all got safe on board, but left all on shore that we had saved from the ship; for we much feared it would prove foggy again, and that we should be driven once more on this miserable country; a country, for the most part, covered

covered perpetually with snow; and what is bare being like bogs, on whose surface grows a kind of moss, bearing a blue and yellow flower, the whole product of the earth in this desolate region. Under the surface, about two feet deep, we came to a firm body of ice, a thing never heard of before; and against the ice-cliffs, which are as high as either of the forelands in Kent, the sea has washed underneath, and the arch overhanging, most fearful to behold, supports mountains of snow, which, I believe, hath lain there ever since the creation."

These are the words in which Capt. Wood described his melancholy situation. He adds, that by the tides setting directly in upon the shore, it may be affirmed with certainty, that there is no passage to the northward. One thing remarkable in his relation, and which seems to contradict the report of former navigators, is, that the sea is there saltier than he had yet tasted it elsewhere, and the clearest in the world, as he could see the shells at the bottom, though the sea was four hundred and eighty feet deep.

On the 9th of July, being all embarked on board the *Prosperous*, they changed their course, and on the 23d of August, they arrived safe in the Thames, without any remarkable intervening accident.

After the miscarriage of this voyage, on which the highest expectations had been formed, the most experienced navigators in England seemed to agree, that a passage by the

the north or north-east had no existence. They were the more confirmed in this error (for an error it is) by the reasons assigned by Capt. Wood, for changing his opinion in this matter; for, before he went on the discovery, he was fully persuaded himself, and likewise persuaded many others, that nothing was more certain. When, however, he first saw the ice, he imagined it was only that which joined to Greenland, and that no solid body of ice extended farther from land than twenty leagues. In this persuasion he altered his course, and coasted along in the direction in which the ice lay, expecting, at every cape or head-land of ice, after running a certain distance, to find an opening into the Polar ocean; after running two or three glasses to the northward in one bay, he found himself entangled in another, and thus it continued till his ship was wrecked. By this experiment, he found the opinion of Barents confuted, namely, that "by steering the middle course between Spitsbergen and Nova Zembla, an open sea might be attained, in which a ship might safely sail as far as the Pole." From his own experience he therefore pronounced, that all the Dutch relations of any man having been under the pole were forgeries, he verily believing, that if there be no land to the northward of 80 degrees, the sea is there frozen, and always continues so. He grounded his opinions upon this remark, that if the body of ice, which he saw, were to be conveyed ten degrees more to the southward, it would

would require many centuries of years to dissolve it.

However, to this positive assertion may be opposed the testimony of many credible persons, some of whom have themselves sailed beyond the 80th degree of north latitude; and others, upon evidence, whose veracity there is no reasonable cause to bring in question. Among the latter, the testimony of Mr. Joseph Moxon, a member of the Royal Society of London, must have considerable weight. In a paper, which this gentleman caused to be printed in the Philosophical Transactions, is this remarkable relation.

“ Being about twenty years ago in Amsterdam, I went into a public house to drink a cup of beer for my thirst; and sitting by the fire, among several people, there happened a seaman to come in, who seeing a friend of his there, who he knew went the Greenland voyage, wondered to see him, because it was not yet time for the Greenland fleet to come home, and asked him, what accident had brought him home so soon. His friend, who was the steersman, answered, that the ships went not out to fish, but only to take in the lading of the fleet, to bring it to an early market. But, said he, before the fleet had caught fish enough to lade us, we, by order of the Greenland company, sailed unto the north pole, and came back again. Whereupon, says Mr. Moxon, I entered into discourse with him, and seemed to question the truth of what he said; but he did assure me

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it was true, and that the ship was then in Amsterdam, and many of the seamen belonging to her ready to justify the truth of it. He moreover told me, that they had sailed two degrees beyond the pole. I asked him, if they found no land or islands about the pole? He answered, no; there was a free and open sea. I asked him, if they did not meet with a great deal of ice? He told me, no; they saw no ice about the pole. I asked him, what weather they had there? He told me, fine warm weather, such as was at Amsterdam in the summer time, and as hot. I should have asked him more questions, but that he was engaged in discourse with his friend, and I could not in modesty interrupt them longer. But I believe the steersman, spoke truth; for he seemed a plain, honest, and unaffected person, and one who could have no design upon me."

Add to this, that the Dutch, who were employed in 1670, in endeavouring to find a north-east passage, advanced within a few degrees of that open sea, which is now commonly navigated by the Russians, and which would infallibly have brought them to the coasts of China and Japan, had they persevered in the course they were pursuing.

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Hon. Com. PHIPPS's Voyage

IN SEARCH OF A

NORTH-EAST PASSAGE.

THE means taken to render this voyage successful, were in every respect proportioned to the importance of the intended discovery, and the vessels that were made choice of were the properest that could be devised. Bomb-ketches are in the first instance stoutly built; and not being over-large, are best adapted for navigating seas that are known to abound with shoals and covered rocks. These vessels, besides their natural strength, were sheathed with planks of seasoned oak three inches thick, to fortify them against the shocks and pressure of the ice, which in their progress they must infallibly encounter. They were besides furnished with a double set of ice-poles, anchors, cables, sails, and rigging, to provide against the terrible effects of the severe and tempestuous weather, which

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frequently happens in high latitudes, even in the middle of the most temperate season. Nor was less attention paid to provide every thing for the comfortable subsistence of the men, and the preservation of their lives. Thus equipped and provided, the command of the Race-horse was given to the Hon. Constantine Phipps, as commodore, and that of the Carcase to Capt. Shiffington Lutwych; the first mounting eight six-pounders and fourteen swivels, burthen three hundred and fifty tons; the latter four six-pounders and fourteen swivels, burthen three hundred tons.

All things being now in readiness, on the 4th of June, 1773, they took their departure from Sheerness, and continued their voyage, without any material occurrence happening till the 15th, when the commodore made the signal to lie-to. They were then off Brasseley Island, and purchased some fish of the Shetland boats.

During the course of this month, as they got into cold latitudes, the warm cloathing was delivered out to both officers and private men, and on the 20th, they entered the polar circle. The weather now began to set in severe, the nights were cold, and the days cloudy. They had reached the 70th degree of latitude, in a course nearly north; and from their leaving Shetland to this time, they had seen nothing remarkable; nor had any accident befallen either of the ships worth mentioning, except that of now and then snapping a rope, or breaking a yard, which

were incidents easily repaired. On the 22d it poured with rain, the air was thick, and the rain froze as it fell; and it is remarkable, that the vicissitudes of heat and cold are more frequent here than in the more southerly latitudes, it often suddenly changing from extreme cold to temperate. On the 29th, being in latitude 78 deg. north, and in longitude 6 deg. 29 min. east from London, they came in sight of land, when the ships brought-to, and the captains held a consultation concerning their future course. The appearance of the land lay from east-south-east to the north-east; and this day they spoke with the Marquis of Rockingham, a Greenland-man, who presented each of the commanders with a deer and a half, which they found well flavoured venison, though not very fat. He likewise informed them, that he had just come from the ice, and that the day before three whales had been crushed to pieces by its closing upon them suddenly. It seems likely, that the ice frequently changes its place in this latitude.

On the 1st of July, at three in the morning, they made Charles's Island, and the next day lay-to, and took the altitude of a mountain, which they named Mount Parnassus. They found it, from the level of the sea, to be three thousand nine hundred and sixty feet high, covered with snow, and at a distance resembling an ancient building, with something like a turret on the top of it. The foot of this mountain, with the hills adjoining, have

have sometimes a very fiery appearance, and the ice and snow on their sides resembling trees and shrubs, glitter with a brilliancy that exceeds the splendour of the brightest gems. When this happens, a violent storm generally succeeds. The next day they spoke with a Hollander, who foretold, that a degree or two farther north was the utmost extent of their progress this season. Having doubled Cape Cold, they anchored in fifteen fathoms of water, about three miles from the land, and sent the boats on shore for water, which they found in abundance, pouring down in little streams from the rocks. On the 4th their latitude was 79 deg. 34 min. north, and their longitude from London 8 deg. 10 min. east. The next day, there being a thick fog, the Race-horle fired guns as signals to keep company, which were answered by the Carcase. A dreadful crackling was heard at a distance, which proved to be the dashing and grinding of the loose pieces of ice against each other, which is heard at many leagues distance. On the 6th it was very foggy, the breezes slight, and islands of ice began to appear. At three in the afternoon, the commodore hauled up from a large body of packed ice; and the fog thickening, both ships kept firing volleys of small arms, to prevent their losing company. The next day, they found themselves beset among the loose ice, which, encreasing continually, gave them incredible trouble. It was with difficulty they could keep any course, for the drifts of ice came so

thick, as to whirl the ship about, as if in a whirlpool. The next day, the ships continued entangled in the ice, and the *Carcase*, being driven to leeward, hoisted out her long-boat to tow up with the commodore; but the ice closing very fast, it was impossible for the boat to live. Orders were then given to tack and stand to the southward; but the ships not being able to make head against the accumulation of ice that gathered round them perpetually, they were under a necessity of applying to their ice-anchors and poles, in order to warp through it. In the evening, the ice beginning to open, they again hoisted out their boats, and with difficulty towed the ships round a cape of ice projecting from the main body, and at last got clear. In extricating themselves from this dangerous situation, the *Race-horse* had her *bow* anchor snapt in the shank, close to the stock, and the *Carcase* lost her starboard *buntin* and head-rails.

It frequently happens, that ships beset in the ice in the manner above related, perish by being dashed to pieces against the solid fields of ice, or crushed by the broken pieces crowding upon one another, and rising so fast above the ship, as to exceed the height of her sides, and then there is no escaping. They were told by some experienced seamen, that the ice rises out of the sea as high sometimes as mountains; and that, several of these mountains, by sticking together and coalescing, form those islands of ice that are frequently
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seen in the lower latitudes, driving up and down the sea as the wind and tides direct them. The greatest danger to be apprehended is, however, from the loose ice; for the whalers often moor their ships to the solid fields of ice, which at certain seasons seem to rest upon the earth, and appear fixed to it, and there find the best fishing. In such situations it often happens, that little or no loose ice is to be seen; yet presently, upon a change of wind, or the blowing of a storm, it shall pour in upon them so suddenly, that they sometimes perish in it. It is not possible to account for the astonishing quantity that will gather in this manner in less than an hour's time. Though it seems to be agreed, that many of the largest fields of ice are frozen to the depth of the sea in which they are found, and that they are bedded on the solid earth, yet it is equally certain, that they are often rent asunder by the raging billows; and that in breaking, they produce the most terrifying noise in nature. It is even asserted, that the clashing of the pieces of loose ice against each other, on any extraordinary agitation of the waves, is attended with a roaring so loud, that a man who is near it can hardly hear the sound of his own voice.

On the 9th they hawled up to the westward, and lost sight of each other; and about nine the next morning they came in sight, and joined company. The weather being now piercing cold, the people had an additional quantity of porter and brandy delivered to

them, two quarts of porter and a pint of brandy being now every man's daily allowance. The next day, they sailed between numberless pieces of ice, among which they saw several whales, but none of the whalers in pursuit of them. The ice now becoming solid and compact, they found it impracticable to continue their course. Upon holding a consultation, the discovery of a passage to the pole, in that direction, appeared impracticable to every officer on board both ships. The commodore, therefore, at seven in the evening, hauled close to the wind; and the *Carcase*, as soon as she could extricate herself, followed his example. The weather continuing foggy, with rain and snow, the sailors were almost worn out with tugging and winding; and although they used the utmost precaution in working through the narrows, yet they could not always avoid striking against the mountains that every where surrounded them. During this night's work, they steered a hundred different courses, to follow the channels.

Having broken out of the ice, on the 11th they sailed along the main body, which appeared perfectly solid and compact, without any passage or inlet. This immense mass of ice extended north-east, as far as they could see from the main-head; and, no doubt, might be a continuation of that ice, in which they were engaged a few days before. The sea was now tolerably clear, for they met with no more fields, and only a few detached islands.

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islands. In the morning they saw the land, and they tacked, Cloven Cliff bearing six miles to the south-south-east. At this time, they were in the latitude of 79 deg. 56 min. north. The next day they saw several English and Dutch Greenlanders at anchor in the Norways, this being their rendezvous to the northward, and they never choose to proceed further. Here they found the current setting so fast to the eastward, that they were forced to come to an anchor to keep from drifting on the ice; the swell from the westward being so great, that, had that happened, it would undoubtedly have staved the ships. At five in the morning, a breeze springing up, they weighed and made sail. Their latitude at this time was 80 deg. 2 min. north.

On the 13th, a wind springing up from the eastward, they came to an anchor in Smear- ingburgh Harbour, in Spitzbergen. Here they remained five or six days to take in fresh water, during which time our journalist was employed in surveying the country, which, to a stranger, had a very awful and romantic appearance. The country is stony, and, as far as can be seen, full of mountains, precipices, and rocks. Between these are hills of ice generated, as it should seem, by the torrents that flow from the melting of the snow on the sides of those towering elevations, which, being once congealed, are continually increased by the snow in winter, and the rain in summer, which often freezes as soon as it falls.

falls. By looking on these hills, a stranger may fancy a thousand different shapes of trees, cattle, churches, ruins, ships, whales, monsters, and all the various forms that fill the universe. Of these ice-hills there are seven, which more particularly attract the notice of a stranger than the rest. These are known by the name of the Seven Iceburgs, and are thought to be the highest of the kind in that country. When the air is clear, and the sun shines full up on these mountains, the prospect is inconceivably brilliant. They sometimes put on the bright glow of the evening rays of the setting-sun, when reflected upon glass at its going down; sometimes they appear of a bright blue, like sapphire, and sometimes like the variable colours of a prism, exceeding in lustre the richest gems in the world, disposed in shapes wonderful to behold, all glittering with a lustre that dazzles the eye, and fills the air with an astonishing brightness.

Smearingburgh Harbour, where they landed, was first discovered by the Dutch, who here erected sheds and conveniencies for boiling the oil from the fat of the whales, instead of barrelling it up to be boiled at home. Here also, allured by the hope of gain, they built a village, and endeavoured to fix a colony; but the first settlers all perished in the ensuing winter. The remains of the village may be traced to this day; and their stoves, kettles, troughs, ovens, and other implements, remained in the shape of solid ice long after the utensils themselves were decayed.

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Our voyagers were told, that the Russians had attempted the same thing in 1772, and that, in the attempt, ten out of fifteen perished during the winter.

It is not easy for a stranger to fix on which first to admire, where every surrounding object is new. The rocks, before a storm, exhibit a fiery appearance, and the sun looks pale upon them, the snow giving the air a bright reflection. The summits are almost always involved in clouds, so that it is but just possible to see the tops of them. Some of these rocks are but one stone from bottom to top, appearing like an old decayed ruin. Others consist of huge masses veined differently, like marble, with red, white, and yellow; and probably, were they to be sawed and polished, would equal, if not excel, the finest Egyptian marble we now so much admire. Perhaps, the distance and danger of carrying large blocks of stone, may be the reason that no trials have been made to manufacture them. On the southerly and westerly sides of these rocks grow all the plants, herbs, and mosses, peculiar to this country; but on the northerly and easterly sides, the wind strikes so cold when it blows from these quarters, that it perishes every kind of vegetable.

Till the middle of May, the whole country is locked up in ice; about the middle of July, the plants are in flower; and about the latter end of the same month, or beginning of August, they have perfected their seed. The earth owes its fertility, in a great measure,
to

to the dung of birds, who build and breed their young here in the summer, and in the winter repair to more favourable climates. The plants that are most common in Spitzbergen are scurvy-grass and crows-foot. There are besides small houseleek, a plant with aloe leaves, an herb like stone-crop, some small snake-weed, mouse-ear, and a herb peculiar to the country, which they call the rock-plant. There are other plants and herbs, but these are the chief. The principal flower seems to be the white poppy; but as for roses, pinks, or carnations, they must not be looked for in this cold and desolate region.

Innumerable fissures and clefts are seen in the rocks and precipices, which afford convenient harbour for birds to lay their eggs, and breed their young in safety. Most of these birds are water-fowl, and seek their food in the sea. Some indeed are birds of prey, and pursue and kill others for their own sustenance; but these are rare. The water-fowls eat strong and fishy, and their fat is not to be endured. They are so numerous about the rocks, as sometimes to darken the air when they rise in flocks, and they scream so horribly, that the rocks ring with their noise. There are a few small birds like our snipes, and a kind of snow-bird, but different from that found about Hudson's Bay. The gentlemen shot some of the water-fowl, but they were strong and ill-tasted. The ice-bird is a very beautiful little creature, but very rare. He is in size and shape like a turtle-dove;

but

but his plumage, when the sun shines upon him, is of a bright yellow, like the golden ring in the peacock's tail, and almost dazzles the eye of the beholder.

The quadrupeds of this forlorn country are white bears, deers, and foxes. How these creatures can subsist in winter, when the whole earth is covered with snow, and the sea locked up in ice, is hardly to be conceived. It has been said, indeed, that when the ocean is all frozen over, and no sustenance to be procured in this country, they travel southerly to the warmer climates, where food proper for them abounds in the immense forests of the northern continent; but whoever considers the vast distance between Spitsbergen and the nearest parts of the northern continent, will be as much at a loss to account for the subsistence of these creatures in their journey, as in the desolate region where they undoubtedly remain. The bear is by far the best accommodated to the climate of which he is an inhabitant: he is equally at home on land and water, and hunts diligently for his prey in both. In summer, he finds plenty of food from the refuse of the whales, sea-horses, and seals, which is thrown into the sea by the whalers, and covers the shore during the time of whaling. They have besides a wonderful sagacity in smelling out the carcasses of the dead, let them be ever so deeply buried in the earth, or covered with stones. The dead therefore that are annually buried here may contribute, in some degree, to the subsistence

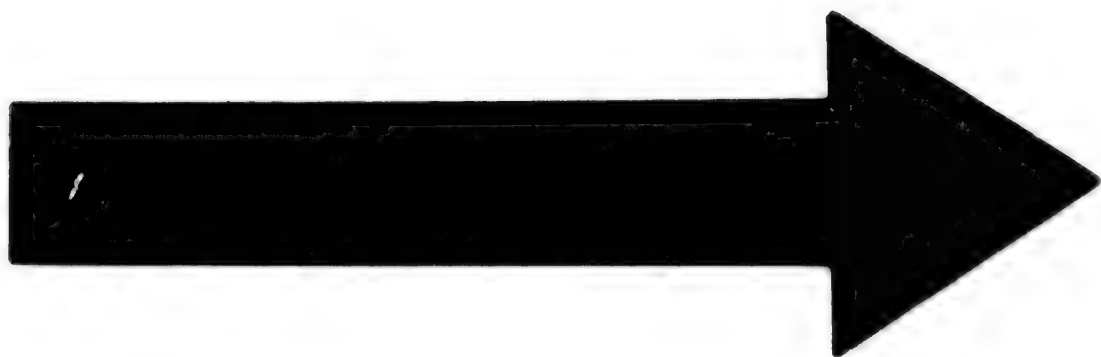
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sistance of a few of these creatures in the winter; but the question will still recur, how the race of them subsisted before the whale-fishery had existence, and before men found the way to this inhospitable shore. Disquisitions of this kind, as they are beyond the reach of human comprehension, serve only to raise our admiration to that omnipotent Being, to whom nothing is impossible. These creatures, as they differ in nothing but their colour and size from those commonly shewn in England, need no description. The foxes differ little in shape from those we are acquainted with, but in colour there is no similitude, their heads being black, and their bodies white. As they are beasts of prey, if they do not provide in summer for the long recess of winter, it were, one would think, almost impossible for them to survive; yet they are seen in plenty, though by their subtlety and swiftness, they are not easily to be caught. The Dutch seamen report, that when they are hungry, they will feign themselves dead, and, when the ravenous birds come to feed upon them, they rise and make them their prey. But the most wonderful thing of all is, how the deer can survive an eight months famine. Like ours, they feed upon nothing that can be perceived, but the vegetables which the earth spontaneously produces; and yet, for eight months in the year, the earth produces neither plant, herb, shrub, nor blade of any kind of grass whatever. They are, besides, but thinly cloathed for so severe a climate;

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climate; and what seems still worse, there is not a bush to be seen to shelter them, within the distance that any man has yet discovered. The means of their subsistence must therefore remain among the secrets of nature, never to be disclosed, as no human being can live here, so as to trace the winter residence of these creatures.

The sounds and bays of Spitsbergen abound with amphibious creatures, which seem best adapted to endure the climate. These are the seals, or sea-dogs, and morfes, or sea-horses, of which the whalers avail themselves when disappointed in completing their lading with the fat of whales. The seal is sufficiently known; but the sea-horse, as it is a creature peculiar to high latitudes, is therefore more rare. It is not easy to say how it came by that name, as there is no more likeness between the sea and land-horse, than there is between a whale and an elephant. The sea-horse has a large round head, larger than that of a bull, but shaped more like that of a pug-dog without ears, than any other animal we are acquainted with. He tapers all the way down to the tail, like the fish we call a lump, and his size is equal to that of the largest ox. His tusks close over his under-jaw, like those of a very old bear, and in length from one foot to two or more, in proportion to the size and age of the animal that breeds them. His skin is thicker than that of a bull, and covered with short mouse-coloured hair, which is sleeker and thicker, just as he happens to



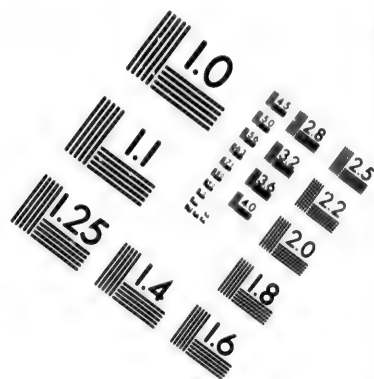
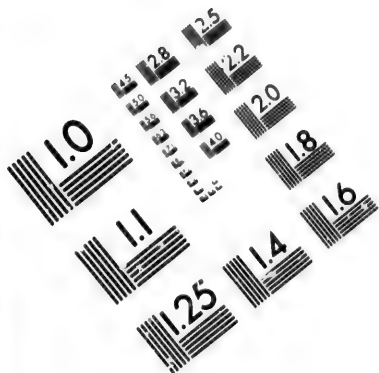
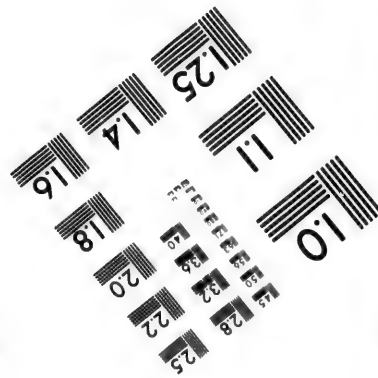
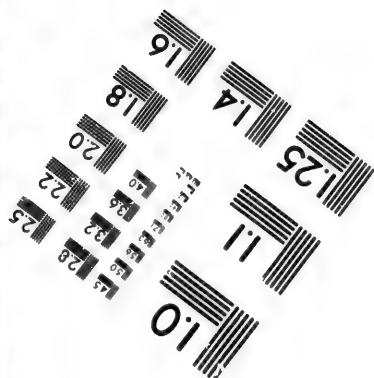
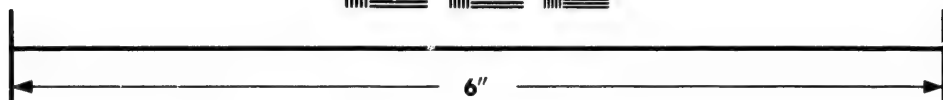
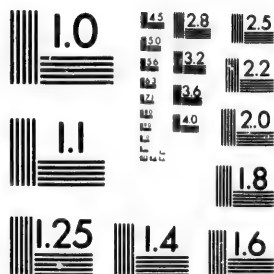


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be in or out of season when he is caught. His paws, before and behind, are like those of a mole, and serve him for oars when he swims, and for legs to crawl when he goes upon the ice or on shore. He is a fierce animal; but being unwieldy when on land, or on the ice, he is easily overcome. These animals are always found in herds, sometimes of many hundreds together, and if one be attacked, the rest make a common cause, and stand by one another till the last gasp. If they be attacked in the water, they will fight desperately, and will even attempt the boats of their pursuers, if any of them be wounded, and not mortally. Some of them have been known to make holes in the bottom of the boat with their tusks, in defence of their young. Their eyes are large, and they have two holes in the upper part of the neck, out of which they eject the water, as the whales are seen to do.

The fish that swarm in the seas of Spitzbergen appear to be designed by Providence rather for the sustenance of one another, than for the food of man. The mackarel, of which there are no great plenty, seem not only to be the most wholesome, and the most palatable, but also the most beautiful. They seem to be a different species to those caught upon our coasts. The upper part of the back is of a vivid blue; the other part, as low as the belly, is of a gem-like green on an azure ground. Underneath the belly, the colour is a transparent white, and the fins shine like polished

polished silver. All the colours glow, when alive in the sea, with such richness, that fancy can hardly form to itself any thing in nature more beautiful. Almost all the other fish on this coast are of a very indifferent flavour, being of an oily nature.

The saw or sword-fish is remarkable, not only for the oddity of its shape, but also for its enmity to the whale. This fish takes its name from a broad flat bone, in length from two to four feet, which projects from his nose, and tapers to a point. On each side, it has teeth like a comb, at the distance of a finger's breadth asunder. He is furnished with a double row of fins, and is of an astonishing strength in the water. His length is from ten to twenty feet; he seems to be formed for war, and war is his profession. The conflict between him and the whale is dreadful, yet he never gives over till he come off victorious, or his sword be broken.

So harmless is the whale, that it is never known to fight but in its own defence; yet, when he is exasperated, he rages dreadfully. Though from his magnitude he may be called the sovereign of the seas, yet, like other sovereigns, he is liable to be vexed and hurt by the meanest reptiles. The whale's louse is a tormenting little animal. Its scales are as hard as those of our prawns, its head is like a louse's head, with four horns; two of which serve as feelers, and the other two are hard and curved, and serve as clenchers to fix him to the whale. Underneath his chest he has two carvers, like scythes, with which he

collects his food, and behind these are four feet that serve him for oars. He has also six other clenchers behind, with which he can rivet himself so closely to his prey, that he can no otherwise be disengaged, but by cutting out the whole piece to which he is joined. He is jointed on the back like the tail of a lobster, and his tail covers him like a shield while he is feeding. He fixes himself on the tenderest part of the whale's body, between the fins, on his sheath, and on his lips, and, like a vulture, eats pieces out of his flesh.

In Spitsbergen they found no springs of fresh water; but in the vallies, between the mountains, are many little rills caused by the rain and melting of the snow in summer, and from these rills the ships are supplied. In calm weather they remarked, that the sea about the island appeared uncommonly still and smooth, and that it was not suddenly moved at the first approach of blowing weather; but that when the storm continued, the waves swelled gradually, and rose to an incredible height. These swelling waves successively follow one another, and roll along before the wind, foaming and raging in a frightful manner; yet they are thought less dangerous than those that break short, and are less mountainous. They also observed, that the ice that rested on the ground was not stationary, but that it changed place; and they likewise learned, that in some seasons there was no ice, whereas this season they were
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in danger of being embayed. There does not, however, from thence appear the least reason to conclude, that any practicable passage to the Indian ocean can ever be found in this direction; for were it certain, that the seas were always open under the pole, yet great bulwarks of ice evidently surround it, sometimes at a less, and sometimes at a greater distance. Besides, were it possible, that chance should direct some fortunate adventurer to an opening at one time, it would be more than a million to one, if the same opening were passable to the next who should attempt it.

The air of Spitsbergen is never free from isicles. If you look through the sun-beams transversely as you sit in the shade, or where you see the rays confined in a body, instead of dark motes, as are seen here, you see myriads of shining particles that sparkle like diamonds; and when the sun shines hot, as it sometimes does, so as to melt the tar in the seams of ships when they lie sheltered from the wind, these shining atoms seem to melt away, and descend like dew. It is seldom that the air continues clear for many days together in this climate; but, when that happens, the whalers are generally successful. There is no difference between night and day in the appearance of the atmosphere about Spitsbergen, one being as light as the other; only, when the sun is to the northward, you may look at it with the naked eye, as at the moon, without dazzling. The fogs here come on so suddenly, that from bright sun-

shine you are presently involved in such obscurity, that you can hardly see even the length of the ship.

These were the observations made by our journalist, while all belonging to the ships were differently engaged in one employment or other: some in taking in water, some in fishing, some in hunting, some in handling the sails and spreading them out to dry, some in scrubbing the ships, and some in viewing the country. The commanders, officers, and astronomers, busied themselves in making observations, being furnished with an apparatus that is said to have cost at least one thousand five hundred pounds. They landed their instruments on a small island in Vogle Sound, and had several opportunities during their stay of using them to advantage. Having erected two tents, the captains from the fishery frequently visited the observers, and expressed their admiration, not only at the perfection of the instruments, but likewise at the dexterity with which they were used. The island, on which these experiments were made, they called Marble Island, from the rock by which it is formed. The ice began to set in apace, though the weather was hot; and the gentlemen having finished their observations, and the ships having taken in water, they prepared for their departure.

On the 19th of July, the commodore made the signal to weigh. At two in the afternoon the ships were under sail, and as soon as they had made the offing, stood to the eastward.

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At three they tacked and steered northward, and before four were entangled among the loose ice, through which they sailed, directing their course along the main body of ice. The next day they continued the same course, but could discover no opening, though they searched every creek, and left no bay or turning unexamined.

On the 21st, the severity of the weather encreasing, an additional quantity of brandy was served to the people, and every comfortable refreshment afforded them that they themselves could wish or require. On the 25th they had gentle breezes, with cloudy weather, and were engaged among some pieces of ice, separated from the main body, which kept them continually tacking and luffing. At length, they entered among mountains and islands of ice, which came upon them so fast, that it was with the utmost difficulty that they could proceed, the Carcase having several times struck against them with such violence, as to raise her head four feet out of the water. They now imagined, from the extent and solidity of these islands, that the late strong gales had caused a separation from the main body; the commodore therefore changed his course. The next day, at seven in the morning, they came in sight of Red-hill, a small mount, which commands an open plain, known by the name of Deersfield, by reason of its fertile appearance, it being the only spot on which they saw no drifts of snow. To the eastward
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lies Muffin's Island, where they sounded, and found forty fathom water on rocky ground. Here Capt. Lutwych sent out the long-boat, with orders to sound along the shore, and to examine the soil. This island is about a mile long, very low, and looks like a black speck. Though the soil is mostly sand and loose stones, and hardly so much as a green weed upon it, yet it is remarkable for a number of birds that resort to it in summer to lay their eggs, and breed their young; and these not of one kind only, but of many different sorts. The eggs were so numerous, and lay so thick upon the ground, that the men who landed trampled on them every step they took.

The company that landed consisted of ten of the crew, with a valiant officer at their head. While they were examining the island, after having sounded the shores, they observed two white bears making towards them, one upon the ice, the other in the water. Major Buz, for that was the officer's travelling title, like Falstaff, was always the boldest man over a cup of sack, and minded killing a bear no more than killing a gnat; but seeing the bears approach very fast, especially that which came in the water, he ordered his men to fire while yet the enemy was at a distance, as he did not think it prudent to hazard the lives of his little company in close fight. All pointed their muskets, and some of the party obeyed orders; but the greater part, judging it safer to depend upon a reserved fire, when they had seemingly discharged

chared their pieces, pretended to retreat. The major, who measured a full fathom in the belly, endeavoured to waddle after his companions; but being soon out of breath, and seeing the bear that came in the water had just reached the shore, he thought of nothing but falling the first sacrifice. His hair already stood an end, and looking behind him, he saw the bear at no great distance, with his nose in the air snuffing the scent. He had all the reason in the world to believe that it was him he scented, and he had scarce breath enough left to call to his men to halt. In this critical situation he unfortunately dropt his gun, and in stooping to recover it, he stumbled against a goose-nest, fell squash upon his belly into it, and almost smothered the dam upon her eggs. The old saying is, "misfortunes seldom come alone." Before he could well rise, the enraged gander came flying to the assistance of his half-smothered consort, and making a dart at the eye of the assailant, very nearly missed his mark, but discharged his fury plump upon his nose. The danger now being pressing, and the battle serious, the bear near, and the gander ready for a second attack, the men, who had not fled far, thought it high time to return to the relief of their leader. Overjoyed to see them about him, but frightened at the bear just behind him, he had forgotten the gander that was over his head, against which one of the men having levelled his piece, fired, and he fell dead at the major's feet.

feet. Now animated by the death of one enemy, he recovered his gun, and faced about to assist in the attack of the second. By this time, the bear was not more than ten yards from him, and beginning to growl, when the major was instantly seized with a laxative complaint. He dropped his accoutrements and fell back, that he might not be in the way of the party, to impede the engagement. In the hurry he was in, for in a man of such valour we must not say the fright, he was unable to unbutton his breeches; the consequences of which may be more easily conceived than decently expressed. The crew in an instant had brought down the bear, and now it was time for their leader to do something great. Having recovered his arms, and seeing the poor beast struggling on the ground, and growling out his last, like a ram in a pinfold, making a short race backwards, in order to redouble his force, he came with nine long strides forwards, and with the strength and fierceness of an enraged bull, thrust his lance full four feet deep in the dying bear's belly. "And now, (said the major, cocking his hat) have not I done for the bear bravely?" "But, captain, (said the sailors, who are always in a good humour on these occasions) you have but half done your work; you have another bear to kill yet." The major, whose situation began to be troublesome, and content with the honour he had already acquired, "My lads, (said he) as I have been the death of one bear, sure six of you may
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kill the other." So ordering four of them to row him on board, he left the remaining six to kill the other bear.

During this little excursion, they killed two bears and a sea-horse. The sea-horse made a desperate defence, being attacked in the water; and had there been but one boat engaged in the combat, he certainly would have come off victoriously. The crew of the Race-horse, having learnt that there were bears and sea-horses on this little spot, were willing to share in the sport of hunting them, as well as in the pleasure of tasting their flesh. They accordingly landed in their boats, and came in good time to assist in pursuing the conquest. It happened, however, that their ammunition being almost spent, one great bear came up to revenge the death of his fellows, and advanced so furiously, growling and barking, that he put the whole company to flight; and some of them, it is said, had no great reason to laugh at the major.

On the 27th, the air being perfectly serene, and the weather moderate, the fish seemed to enjoy the temperature, and to express it by their sporting. The whales were seen spouting their fountains towards the skies, and the fin-fish following their example, the whole prospect being more pleasing and picturesque than any they had yet beheld in this remote region. The very ice in which they were beset looked beautiful, and put forth a thousand glittering forms; and the tops of the mountains, which they could see like sparkling

ling gems at a vast distance, had the appearance of so many silver stars illuminating a new firmament; but this flattering prospect did not continue long. By an accurate observation, they were now in 80 deg. 47 min. north latitude, and in 21 deg. 10 min. east longitude from London, this being the highest latitude they reached. They now directed their course towards the seven islands, which were then in sight.

The next day, they had fresh easterly breezes, which, from moderate weather the preceeding day, changed to piercing cold. At midnight, the west end of Weygate Straits bore south by east, so that they were now in the very spot where Barents had supposed an opening would be found into the polar seas; yet so far from it, they could discover nothing from the mast-head but a continued continent of solid ice, except the islands already mentioned. On this ice, however, there were many bears, some of which came so near the ships as to be shot dead with small arms. These bears are very good eating, especially where no better is to be purchased, and the whalers account them as good as beef. In many parts of their body, they are musket-proof, and unless they are hit on the open chest, or on the flank, a blow with a musket ball will hardly make them turn their backs. Some of the bears killed in these countries weighed from seven to eight hundred weight.

On the 29th, sailing among innumerable island of ice, they found the main body too
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solid for the ships to make the least impression upon it; and finding no opening, the commodore resolved to send a party, under the command of the first lieutenant, to examine the land, which at a distance appeared like a plain, diversified with hills and mountains, and exhibited, in their situation, a tolerable landscape. On trying the water, it was less salt than any sea-water they had ever tasted; and they found likewise, that the ice was no other than a body of congealed fresh water.

On the 30th, the weather being clear, they ran close to the main body of the ice, and the sun continuing to shine, made them almost forget the climate they were sailing in; but it was not long before they had reason for severe recollection. In coasting along, they observed many openings, and were in hopes, from their distant appearance, that a passage might be found between them; but upon trial it was found, as the Dutch fishermen had foretold, that those appearances were deceitful.

On the 31st, at midnight, the easternmost land lay in sight; but they could not make it out to be an island. They rather judged it to be a continent; but found it impossible to determine that question with certainty, as it lay beyond their reach. At nine in the morning, the Carcase hoisted out her cutter, and filled her empty water-casks with water from the ice. On this ice lie great quantities of snow, and as soon as a pit was dug, it filled

with some soft clear water, not inferior to that of many land springs. This day a bear came over the ice to visit them, the first they had seen since they left Muffin's Island. They saluted him with a volley of small arms, and he returned the compliment by turning his back upon them.

The first of August proved a day of trial. Lying-to among close ice, with the loose ice driving fast to shore, the commodore was desirous of surveying the westernmost of the seven islands, which appeared the highest, in order to judge, from the prospect on the hills, of the possibility of proceeding further on the discovery. With this view they carried out their ice-anchors, and made both ships fast to the main body, which is a practice very common with the fishing ships that annually frequent those seas. Of this reconnoitring party were the captains, the lieutenants, one of the mathematicians, the pilots, and some chosen sailors selected from both ships. They set out about two in the morning, and sometimes sailing, and sometimes drawing their boats over the ice, they with difficulty reached the shore, where the first objects they saw were a herd of deer, so very tame, that they seemed as curious to gaze at the strangers, as the strangers were pleased to see them; for they came five or six together so near, that they might have been killed with the thrust of a bayonet. This is a proof, that animals are not naturally afraid of man, till, by the fate of their associates, they are taught the danger

ger of approaching them; a proof too, that animals are not destitute of reflection, otherwise how should they conclude, that what has befallen their fellow animals will certainly happen to them, if they run the like risque? The gentlemen, however, suffered only one of these fearless innocents to be fired at, and that was done by a sailor when they were absent on observation. On this island they gathered scurvy-grass, and in many places they could perceive the sides of the hill covered with verdure, on which these deer undoubtedly fed. After having ascended the highest hill on the sea-coast, and taken a view of the country and the ocean all round, the gentlemen descended, and about five in the afternoon embarked again on their return to the ship, at which they arrived safe about ten, after an absence of twenty hours. They were greatly disappointed by the haziness of the weather on the tops of the mountains, which confined the prospect, and prevented their taking an observation with the instruments they had carried with them with that intention.

Their situation now began to be serious, and it was discovered too late, that by grappling to the ice, as practised by the Greenlanders, they had endangered the loss of the ships, the loose ice closing so fast about them, that they found it absolutely impossible to get them disengaged; and there was besides great reason to fear, that one or both would soon be crushed to pieces. Great minds

are ever most distinguished by their expedients on the most alarming occasions. The commodore set all hands to work to form a dock in the solid ice, large enough to moor both ships; and by the alacrity with which that service was performed, the ships were preserved from the danger of immediate destruction. The ships being thus far secured, the officers, pilots, and masters, were all summoned on board the commodore, to consult on what further was to be done in their present unpromising situation, when it was unanimously agreed, that their deliverance was hopeless, and that they must either provide to winter upon the adjacent islands, or attempt to launch their boats into the open sea, which was already at a considerable distance; for the loose ice had poured into the bay, in which they were at anchor, with so much rapidity, and in such astonishing quantities, that the open sea was already far out of sight. However, before any thing further was undertaken, the men were ordered to their quarters, that they might refresh themselves with sleep. While commanders preserve their fortitude, the sailors never lose their courage. They rose in the morning with as much alacrity and unconcern, as if they had been sailing with a fine breeze in the British Channel.

On the 2d of this month, it was thought advisable to make one desperate attempt to extricate the ships, by cutting a channel to the westward into the open sea. The scooping out the dock with so much expedition, by a party

party only of one ship, raised high expectations of what might be performed by the united labours of both the crews. No body of men ever undertook a work of such difficulty with so much cheerfulness and confidence of success as the sailors observed on this occasion. Their ice-saws, axes, sledges, poles, and the whole group of sea-tools, were in an instant all employed in facilitating the work; but after cutting through blocks of solid ice from eight to fifteen feet deep, and coming to others of many fathoms, that exceeded the powers of man to separate, the attempt was laid aside as hopeless, and another more promising, though not less laborious, was adopted in its room.

The next day, after the men had again refreshed themselves with sleep, it was resolved to fit up the boats belonging to both the ships with such coverings as were most easily to be accommodated, and of lightest conveyance, and by skaiting them over the ice, endeavour to launch them in the open sea. Could this be effected, they hoped, that by sailing and rowing to the northernmost harbour of Spitzbergen, they might arrive at that island before the departure of the last ships belonging to the fishery for Europe. While the boats were getting ready for this expedition, a second party were dispatched to the island, with orders to take the distance as exact as it was possible to the nearest open sea. As all the people belonging to the ships were not to be engaged in these services, those who were un-

employed diverted themselves in hunting and killing the bears, which now, attracted perhaps by the savoury smell of the provisions dressed on board the ships, came every day over the ice to repeat their visits. Several of these were killed occasionally, and this day they fought a sea-horse, in which engagement the second lieutenant of the *Carcase* signalized his courage in a most desperate rencountre; in which, however, though his life had like to have paid for it, he at last fortunately succeeded.

The pilots, who had been sent to make observations on the islands already mentioned, made their report, that the nearest water they had seen was about ten leagues to the westward; that in their passage they had met with great numbers of spars or pine-trees, floating about the island, some of them of considerable size, with the bark rotted off, and the bodies much worm-eaten; that there was neither tree nor shrub to be seen growing on any of the seven islands, nor upon any land they had yet discovered in that latitude, nor for ten degrees further south, and that the trees they had seen must therefore have come from a great distance. Though there is nothing new in this observation, the like being annually observed by all the navigators who frequent those seas in the summer, and who collect their wood from those drifts, yet the country from whence they proceed has hitherto been thought a mystery; but it being now certain, that many of the great rivers
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that flow through the northernmost parts of Russia, empty themselves into this sea, and that there is an open communication throughout the different parts of it at different seasons of the year, there seems very little reason to doubt, but that those trees are torn up by the land floods, and are precipitated into the sea by the rapidity of the streams. It has, indeed, been objected, that all the wood that is found floating in this manner about the islands in high latitudes, is all of it barked and worm-eaten; and that, if these trees were torn up and precipitated into the sea in the manner above supposed, some of it would appear sound and unbarked, as in its first state. To this it may be answered, that were the course of the tides to run as constantly to the northward, as the course of the rivers runs into the sea, this objection would be unanswerable. The very reverse is known to be the fact, as neither the winds nor the tides tend to the northward for any considerable part of the year; so that, from the time these trees enter the ocean, it must, in the ordinary course of things, be many ages before they can reach the latitudes in which they are now found. Because, if they be driven northwards by the strength of a storm from the south, they will be driven in another direction by the next storm that happens from another quarter; and all the time the storm continues, they will be driven to and fro by the tides, which seldom set long to the north: therefore, being in continual motion for ages, or being cast upon
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the shore by tempests, or high tides, and lying there, exposed to the air till tempests or high tides return them again to the ocean, they will, in a long progression of time, be reduced to the state in which they are constantly found.

The ice continued to surround them on the 5th, and appeared to grow more solid and fixed. Those who till now had retained hopes, that the south-east wind would again disunite its substance, and open a passage for their deliverance, began to despair, as the wind had blown for twenty-four hours from that quarter, from which alone they could have relief, and not the least alteration to be perceived. The men, however, were as joyous as ever, and shewed not the least concern about the danger of their situation. Early in the morning, the man at the mast-head of the Carcase gave notice, that three bears were making their way very fast over the ice, and that they were directing their course towards the ship. They had undoubtedly been invited by the scent of the blubber of the sea-horse killed a few days before, which the men had set on fire, and which was burning on the ice at the time of their approach. They proved to be a she-bear and her two cubs; but the cubs were nearly as large as the dam. They ran eagerly to the fire, and drew out from the flames part of the flesh of the sea-horse that remained unconsumed, and eat it voraciously. The crew of the ship, by way of diversion, threw great lumps of the flesh of the sea-horse,

horse, which they had still left, out upon the ice, which the old bear fetched away singly, laid each lump before her cubs as she brought it, and dividing it, gave each a share, reserving but a small portion to herself. As she was fetching away the last piece they had to bestow, they levelled their muskets at the cubs, and shot them both dead; and they also wounded the dam in her retreat, but not mortally. It would have drawn tears of pity from any but unfeeling minds, to see the affectionate concern expressed by this poor beast, in the dying moments of her expiring young. Though she was sorely wounded, and could but just crawl to the place where they lay, she took the lump of flesh she had carried away, as she had done the others before, tore it in pieces, and laid it down before them. When she saw they refused to eat, she laid her paws first upon one, and then upon the other, and endeavoured to raise them up. All this time it was pitiful to hear her moan. When she found she could not stir them, she went off, and when she had got at some distance she looked back and moaned; and that not availing her to entice them away, she returned, and smelling round them, began to lick their wounds. She went off a second time, as before, and having crawled a few paces, looked again behind her, and for some time stood moaning. Still her cubs not rising to follow her, she returned to them again, and with signs of inexpressible fondness, went round them, pawing them, and moaning.

Finding

Finding at last that they were cold and lifeless, she raised her head towards the ship, and, like Caliban in the Tempest, growled a curse upon the murderers, which they returned with a volley of musket balls. She fell between her cubs, and died licking their wounds. If what is related by a voyager of credit in the last century be true, the filial fondness of these animals is no less remarkable than the maternal. “The young ones (says he) keep constantly close to the old ones. We observed, that two young ones and an old one would not leave one another; for if one ran away, it turned back again immediately, as soon as it heard the others in danger, as if it would come to help them. The old one ran to the young one, and the young one to the old one; and rather than they would leave one another, they would suffer themselves to be all killed.”

On the 6th of August, they discovered that the drift of the ship, with the whole body of ice, inclined fast to the eastward, and that they were already embayed in the midst of the seven islands. They therefore sent off the pilots of both ships with a party of sailors, to the northernmost island, to see what discoveries could be made from the promontories there. They returned at night, after a fatiguing journey, with a dismal account, that nothing was to be seen from thence but a vast continent of ice, of which there was no end; and that the thought of wintering in such a situation,

situation, was more dreadful than that of perishing by an instant death.

On the 7th, the boats were all brought in readiness on the ice, fitted with weather-cloths about thirteen inches above the gunwhale, in order to keep off the cold as much as possible, if by good fortune they should be enabled to launch them in an open sea. The day was employed chiefly in boiling provisions to put in the boats for the intended voyage; in delivering out bags to the men to carry their bread, and in packing up such necessaries as every one could take along with him; for now every man was to be his own porter, the necessary provisions and liquors being found load enough for the boats, and twenty-five days bread load enough for each man. This being settled, when night came on, they were all ordered on board to sleep, in order to prepare them for the fatigues of the next day.

The next day, at six in the morning, all hands were ordered to turn out, and a detachment of fifty men from each ship, headed by their respective officers, were appointed to begin the hard task of hauling the launces along the ice. The bravest and gallantest actions performed in war do not so strikingly mark the true character of a sea commander, as the readiness and alacrity with which his orders are obeyed in times of imminent danger. Every one now strove who should have the honour to be listed in the band of haulers, of whom the Commodore took the direction, leaving Capt. Lutwych to take care of both
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the ships, that if any favourable turn should happen in the disposition of the ice, he might make use of the remaining part of both the crews to improve it. Upon a general consultation of officers, previous to this undertaking, it had been agreed, and an order issued accordingly, that no person on board, of whatever rank, should encumber himself with more cloaths than what he wore on his back. Upon this occasion, therefore, the officers dressed themselves in flannels, and the common men put on the cloaths the officers had thrown off. It was truly laughable to see these motley bands yoked in their new harness; and, to say the truth, there was not one solemn face among the two companies. That headed by the Commodore drew stoutly for the honour of their leader, and that headed by their lieutenants had their music to play to them, that they might dance it away, and keep pace with their commander in chief. Indeed, the officers who headed them were deservedly beloved as well as their commanders, particularly Lieut. Beard, whose steady and uniform conduct in times of the greatest danger cannot be sufficiently admired and applauded. Neither swayed by passion, nor disconcerted by the sudden embarrassments that often intervened, his conduct was always calm, and his orders resolute. He never was heard, during the whole voyage, on the most pressing emergencies, to enforce his commands with an oath, or to call a sailor by any other than his usual name; and so sensible were they

they of his manly behaviour, that, when the ship was paid off at Deptford, they were only prevented by his most earnest request from stripping themselves to their shirts, to cover the streets with their cloaths, that, in getting to his coach, he might not tread in the dirt. This evidently evinces, that the British tars in general do not stand in need of that severe discipline, which some make a plea of in defence of their tyranny.

After the utmost efforts of human nature exerted for six hours, they had only proceeded a single mile; and now it was time for them to dine, and recruit their almost exhausted spirits. As the commodore had laboured with them, it was in character that he should dine with them also; and an accident happened that made it necessary for him so to do. The cook and his mates, who were bringing the commodore and the officers their dinners under covers, to keep out the cold after coming from a warm fire-side, had made a little too free with the brandy-bottle before they set out, and before they had gotten half way to the launches, the liquor began to operate. The cooks were sometimes very near boarding each other, sometimes hauled off, and sometimes steered right a-head. At length, coming to a chasm or parting of the ice, which they were obliged to leap, down came the master cook with dish, cover, meat, and all; and what was still worse, though it was not then thought of much value, the commodore's common service of plate, which the cook carried

ried for the officers to dine on, fell into the chasm, and instantly sunk to the bottom. This accident brought the cook a little to himself, and he stood pausing, whether he should jump down the gulf after the plate, or proceed to the commodore, make his apology, and beg mercy. His mates persuaded him to the latter, as the commodore was a kind-hearted gemman, and would never take a man's life away for a slip on the ice. Besides, said they, it was a great jump for a fat man, and commodore, they were sure, had rather lose all the plate in the great cabin than lose cookie. Comforted a little by this speech, the cook proceeded; but let his mates go on first with what remained, to carry the tidings of what had befallen the rest. When the commodore had heard the story, he judged how it was with them all. "But where is the cook?" said he to the mates. "He's crying behind, an please your honour." In the mean time the cook came up. "Cook, (said the commodore) bring me your dinner: I will dine to day with my comrades." "My dinner! ay, a pound of the flesh next my heart, if your honour likes it." The readiness of the reply shewed the sincerity of the cook's good-will, and pleased the commodore better than a feast upon turtle. He dismissed him with a smile, and partook with the officers of what was left, and they made up their dinners with a mess from the common men. This conduct raised the commodore much in the opinion of his people.

Word

Word was brought, just as they were beginning to renew their labour, that the whole body of ice had changed its situation, and was moving to the westward; that the ships were both afloat, and that the ice was parting. The joy which this news diffused through the two companies of haulers is easier to be conceived than expressed. They instantly shook off their harness, ran to assist in working the ships, and once more to resume their proper employments. When they arrived at the ships, Capt. Lutwych, who was no less beloved by his men than the commodore, had by his example and judicious directions done wonders. Both ships were not only afloat, with their sails set, but actually cut and warped through the ice near half a mile. This ray of hope, however, was soon darkened; the body of ice suddenly assumed its former direction to the eastward, and closed upon them again as fast as ever. While the ships remained in the ice-dock, they were lashed together for their greater security; but now being launched and afloat, the ice pressed upon them with such weight, that it was every moment expected the hauser that held them together would break. Orders were therefore given, that the ships should be released by slackening the hawser.

The drift continued eastward till two in the morning, and all that time the ships were in danger of being crushed by the closing of the channel in which they rode. They had now drifted two miles to the eastward, the men

were worn out with fatigue in defending the ships with their ice-poles from being ingulfed, and now nothing but scenes of horror and perdition appeared before their eyes, But the Omnipotent, in the very moment, when every hope of deliverance from their own united endeavours had relinquished them, interposed in their favour, and caused the winds to blow, and the ice to part in an astonishing manner, rending and cracking with a tremendous noise, surpassing that of the loudest thunder. At this very instant, the whole continent of ice, which before was extended beyond the reach of sight from the highest mountains, moved together in various directions, splitting and dividing into vast bodies, and forming hills and plains of various directions. All hearts were now again revived, and the prospect of being once more released from the frozen chains of the north, inspired the men with fresh vigour. Every officer and every idler on board now laboured for life. The sails were all spread, that the ship might have the full advantage of the breeze to force them through the channels that were already opened, and to help them, like wedges, to rend the cliffs that were but just opening.

During the time the greater part of the crews were employed in warping the ships with ice-anchors, axes, saws, and poles, a party from both ships were dispatched to launch the boats, which was no easy task to accomplish. The ice, though split in many thousand pieces, was yet frozen like an island round

round the launches ; and though it was of no great extent, yet the boats were of a weight hardly to be moved by the small force that could be spared to launch them. They were, besides, by the driving of the ice, at more than five miles distance from the ships, and at this time no channel of communication was yet opened. Providence, however, was manifest even on this occasion ; for the islands on which the launches stood parted while the men were hauling them, and by that lucky circumstance they were launched with great facility, without the loss of a man, though the ice cracked, as it were, under their feet. The people on board had not been able to force their way with the ships much more than a mile, when the party in the launches joined them ; and now, several bears, excited by what curiosity or instinct is not easy to determine, came posting over the ice to be spectators of their departure ; and advanced so near the ships that they might have been easily mastered, had not the men been engaged in business of a more serious nature.

The ice seemed to open as fast as it had before closed, when the wind blew westerly, and from the north : a strong presumptive proof of land to the eastward, which stopping the current of loose ice in driving from the north and west, closes it in course, and renders it compact. On the contrary, when the wind blows off the land, and the current sets to the sea, the loose ice being no longer opposed, disperses itself again in the ocean, where it again

floats, till the same cause produces the same effect. If therefore the land, which our voyagers saw on the 30th, and which they could not determine with certainty to be an island, should, upon some future occasion, be discovered to be a continent, then the closing of the loose ice so suddenly about the seven islands, and its crowding one piece upon another to a great height, when violently agitated by tempests from the north or west, will be accounted for fully and naturally.

About two in the morning of the 10th, the fog being thick, and the weather calm, and the men very much fatigued, they were ordered to their quarters, to refresh themselves with sleep. It was likewise very cold, and much rain fell; and as the wind was variable, they could make but little progress. The ice, in the morning early, seemed rather to close upon them than to divide; and being apprehensive for their boats, they attempted to hoist their launches on board; but that belonging to the *Carcaie*, being either too unwieldy, or the men too much fatigued to effect it, they slung her to the ship's side. About eight the breeze sprung up fresh from the north-east, when it was exceedingly cold; but it opened the ice to the westward. They then made all the sail they could, driving with the loosening ice, and parting it wherever it was moveable with their whole force. Towards noon, they lost sight of the seven islands, and in a very little time after, Spitzbergen

bergen was seen from the mast head, which gave them inexpressible joy.

The next day, the men, who had been much dispirited with hard labour, cold, and watching, having now a prospect of speedy deliverance, and seeing the ice no longer adhere in immoveable bodies, began, after a little refreshment, to resume their usual cheerfulness. They had not, till the second closing of the ice, after the attempt to dig a passage through it had proved ineffectual, and the hauling the launches had been tried with little better success, discovered the least despondency; but when they had exerted their utmost efforts, and Providence, which at first seemed to second their endeavours, appeared to have forsaken them; when their pilots had filled their minds with the terrors of their situation, and their officers had given the ships and their most valuable effects over for lost, the men then began to reflect on the hardships they were likely to suffer, and to be impressed with the sense of their common danger. Their apprehensions, however, were but temporary, and the moment they were released from their icy prison, and were within sight of a clear sea, their sorrow was changed to mirth, and their melancholy to rejoicing. Festivity and jollity took place of abstinence and gloomy apprehensions, and before they arrived at Spitsbergen, every countenance was brightened with gleams of satisfaction.

They had now time to admire the ice that had parted from the main body; and as it no longer

longer obstructed their course, the various shapes in which the broken fragments appeared were indeed very curious and amusing. One remarkable piece described a magnificent arch so large and completely formed, that a sloop of considerable burden might have sailed through it without lowering her masts; another represented a church with windows, and pillars, and domes; and a third, a table with icicles hanging round it like the fringes of a damask cloth. A fertile imagination might have here found entertainment enough; for the similitude of all that art or nature ever yet produced might here be imagined.

They cleared the ice on the 12th, and bore away with all sails set for the harbour of Smearingburg, in which they had before cast anchor. At two in the afternoon they anchored in North Bay, and at half past nine came to an anchor in their former station, where they found four Dutch Greenlandmen lying in readiness to depart. The Dutchmen acquainted the commodore, that all the English fishing ships set sail on the 10th of July, the day to which they are obliged by contract to stay, to entitle their owners to receive the bounty-money allowed by parliament for the encouragement of that fishery. About the same time, the greater part of the Dutch set sail likewise from Spitsbergen on their voyage home; but it is a practice with these last, to take it by turns to wait till the severity of the weather obliges them to leave the coast, in order to pick up such men as may by acci-

dent have lost their ships in the ice, and who, notwithstanding, may have had the good fortune to save their lives by means of their boats. This is a very humane institution, and does credit to the Dutch government. The turn of waiting at Spitsbergen falls annually to the lot of about five Dutch ships, who are obliged to send out their boats daily in search of their unfortunate fellow-subjects. Some of these boats have themselves suffered severely, and have been detained seven or eight days by severe weather in these excursions.

As soon as they arrived at Smearingburg Harbour, the day proving fine, the commodore ordered a tent to be raised on the lower point to the south-west, where there was a level plain for the space of two miles; and where all the mathematical apparatus were again taken on shore for a second trial. The ovens were also taken on shore, and a considerable quantity of good soft bread was baked for the refreshment of the men. Hacluit's Headland is an island on the north-west point of Spitsbergen, about fifteen miles in circumference, on which is found plenty of scurvy-grass; and in the vallies, some of which extend from two to three miles, there is plenty of other grass in summer, on which the deer are supposed to feed.

The people were now fully employed in overhauling the rigging, tarring the ship's sides, taking in water, paying and securing the masts, and in preparing the ships for pursuing their voyage upon discovery, or, if that

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was found impracticable, for returning to England.

Vast pieces of broken ice, supposed to have fallen from the icebergs, came floating into harbour on the 17th. When these pieces, which are undermined by the continual agitation of the sea in stormy weather, lose their support, they tumble with a crack that surpasses the loudest thunder; but they were told, that no other thunder was ever heard in that latitude.

It may not be amiss here to observe, that the activity and enterprising spirit of the Russians begin to manifest themselves every where; and it is not improbable, but that the maritime powers may one day or other have cause to repent their emulation in contributing to aggrandise the naval power of that rising people. The dominions of the Russian empire are situated to command the trade of the universe: they have erected a yard for building ships at Kamtschatka, to improve their discoveries from that quarter, and to open a trade from thence to China. They have attempted to settle colonies, as our voyagers were told, on the southernmost districts of Spitsbergen; and that those of the new settlers, who survived the first winter, were preparing to encounter the rigour of the climate in a second. This could only be done by way of experiment, to try if a settlement were practicable, and criminals only were devoted to make that experiment.

Our journalists made several excursions to the adjoining islands, during the six days they anchored here, to make observations, take in water, refresh the men, and refit. Here the birds appeared in astonishing numbers, it being the season for bringing forth their young, and teaching them to fly and to dive. Of all the birds that breed in these islands, the burgermaster is the largest and the most ravenous. He is so called by the Dutch from his size and authority, as he holds all the other birds in subjection. His bill is long and crooked, rather like that of the stork than that of the hawk, and is of a yellow colour. He has a red ring about his eyes, is web-footed, but has only three claws on each foot. His wings are of a beautiful pearl colour, edged with white; his back a silver grey, his body white as snow, and his tail of the same colour, which he spreads like a fan when he flies. He builds his nest very high in the rocks, inaccessible either to bears or foxes. He preys upon all the other birds, and eats the carrion of fish or flesh, or whatever comes in his way. His cry is horrible, and when he screams, the mallemuch, a bird as large as a duck, is so much intimidated, that he will sink down, and suffer him to devour him without opposition. Our journalists found it very dangerous to pursue his way over the hills and precipices in this rugged country. The clefts on the mountains are, like those in the ice, frequently impassable; but they are abundantly more hazardous, being sometimes concealed

cealed under the snow, so that a traveller is engulfed before he be aware. Many have been entombed in these clefts, and perished in the hearing of their companions, without a possibility of relief. To a contemplative mind, however, even the deformities of nature are not displeasing, the wisdom of the Creator being manifestly displayed in the minutest part of his creation.

The ships unmoored on the 19th, and the next day cleared the harbour. On the 22d they found themselves in 80 deg. 14 min. north latitude, and in 5 deg. 44 min. east longitude. On the 11th of September, being then in 57 deg. 44. min. north, at ten at night, the wind all at once veered to the southward, and a strong gale with a great sea came on, when the ships parted, and never more came in sight till they met off Harwich, on the English coast. When the gale came on, the commodore's lights not appearing, the Carcase fired a six pounder; but the fire not being returned by the Racehorse, it was concluded, that the commodore was at too great a distance to hear the signal. At four in the morning, the gale encreasing, the Carcase made every preparation to withstand the threatening storm. On the 12th, at midnight, the hurricane was so violent, that the sea made a free passage over the ship. All the provisions and casks that were lashed on the deck were washed overboard. Two pumps were continually kept going; and at four in the morning, they shipped such heavy
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seas,

seas, as washed over-board all the spars and bombs that had been, with all possible care, secured on the deck. We had now no sight of the commodore, and we were under great apprehensions for his safety, as his vessel laboured much more than the Carcase. At this time, one of the mates, the carpenter, and a foremast man, were washed over-board. The storm, however, at last abated, though the weather was at intervals foggy, rainy, and squally. We shall pass over the account given of this voyage, from the present time till the 26th, when the Carcase arrived at Harwich, and, to their great joy and surprise, found the Racehorse at anchor there. Capt. Lutwyche then waited on the commodore, from whom he learnt, that in the storm they had all their boats washed overboard, and, in order to ease the ship, they had been obliged to throw over-board all their guns but two. Both ships sailed from hence on the 27th, and on the 30th came to an anchor at Deptford.

Thus ended a voyage, which seems to have determined the question so much agitated concerning the navigation to the north pole, and proved what Capt. Wood had before asserted, that no passage would ever be found practicable in that direction. From the quantities of ice, which that navigator met with in 76 degrees of north latitude, he indeed concluded erroneously, that the 80th degree would bound the passage towards the pole; and that from thence the polar region was either a continued continent of solid ice, or that land filled up the intermediate space. It

has been found, however, that those seas are navigable as far as between the eighty-first and eighty-second degrees of latitude; and it may possibly happen, that in some future years they may be found navigable a degree or two further; but it may with certainty be concluded, that the purposes of commerce can never be answered by a course under the pole.

It is an indisputable fact, that the north sea communicates with the eastern sea, and that the passage to China and Japan may be performed with difficulty by a north-east course, by watching the opportunity, when a few days in the year the north sea may be open; but who would think of exposing a ship's company to the hazard of being frozen to death in a tedious, uncertain, and dangerous passage, when a safe, certain, and more speedy passage lies open before them at all times?

When we consider the discoveries made by Behring to the east of Japan, and the continent he there met with, there seems reason to believe, that the land seen by Commodore Phipps, to the eastward of the seven islands, might be a continuation of that continent. In that case, it is not improbable, that either that continent may join to the western part of America, or that it may extend southward, and form a part of that continent so much sought after in the southern hemisphere. A small premium of two or three thousand pounds secured by parliament, to be paid to the

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the owner or owners of any Greenland fishing ship, that should be fortunate enough to discover such a continent to the eastward or northward of the seven islands, might possibly have a better effect, than many expensive expeditions fitted out solely for the purpose of such discoveries. This, by a trading nation, would surely be well bestowed, were it only to improve the science of geography. It is indeed true, that the reward secured by parliament for the discovery of a north-west passage has not yet been attended with that success, with which the promoters of the bill had flattered themselves and the public.

Though the Hudson's Bay company were bound by their charter to further and promote the discovery, yet they were generally suspected, from interested motives, to oppose and discourage every attempt to accomplish it. Capt. Middleton, who was sent, in 1740, in a king's ship upon that service, returning without success, was publicly charged with having received a bribe of five thousand pounds to defeat the undertaking, and by his reports to discourage any further attempts in pursuit of it. This charge was strongly supported, and generally credited. Mr. Dobbs, by whose interest Capt. Middleton had been employed, had the address to prevail with the then ministry, to preclude any future scheme of private corruption, by promoting the public reward afterwards voted by parliament.

. On the whole, there is great reason to conclude, from what has been said in this volume of a north-east passage, is likewise true of a passage by the north-west; that it most certainly exists, but will never be found practicable for mercantile purposes. Notwithstanding the many unsuccessful attempts that have been made, the return of the blessings of peace have again revived the spirit of discovery; and at this instant a subscription is said to be going forward among some men of large fortune, for raising a sum of sixteen thousand pounds, to fit up a ship for a voyage of science to the South Seas and round the world. Some of the principal of the literati are engaged, in order that observations and experiments may be made in every branch of human knowledge. It is to include an attempt to reach the north pole. A party by land, for the sake of observations, are to cross the whole continent of North America, to meet the ship at Port Sir Francis Drake, to the north of California. Sir Joseph Banks and Dr. Heberden are in the subscription, and Dr. Priestley is to make the voyage. Lord Shelburne offers to be at the expence of sending a naturalist by land to Kamtschatka, to meet the ship there also. A settlement is to be made, and left at New Zealand, merely for the purpose of cultivating and making experiments on the New Zealand hemp, and other curious plants, which may be examined by residing two or three years there.

A D D E N-

A D D E N D A.

*Narrative of the Loss of the GROSVENOR
EAST-INDIAMAN.*

OF the crew of this ship, only four have yet returned to England, to give the melancholy account of her loss, and the still more melancholy fate of the passengers, officers, and people. These four men, Robert Price, Thomas Lewis, John Warmington, and Barney Larcy, arrived at the East-India House in the month of July last, and have furnished the public with the following melancholy truths.

The Grosvenor sailed from Trincomale on the 13th of June, 1782, and saw no land after leaving Ceylon, till the unfortunate fourth of August. The mast was faulty before they left Trincomale, and they met with a hard gale of wind after leaving that port. The wind having freshened, and blowing hard in squalls, one of the seamen was sent aloft to get down the foretop-gallant yard, when he thought he saw the land, and came down to report it; but he was sent up again, as they would not believe him.

After the watch was relieved, at four in the afternoon, this seaman, having been de-

tained in getting down the top-gallant-yard, and coming from aloft about half past four, he plainly saw land from the deck; but the third mate, who had relieved the second, the chief mate being sick, would not believe it, saying it was only the reflection of the sky, and would not put the ship's head off too sea. On this the quarter-master went and acquainted the captain, who came out, and wore ship immediately; but in wearing she struck, and they had just time only to call all hands once. The wind very soon shifted, and came off shore, when they hoisted up the fore-top-sail, and endeavoured to back off; but they only twisted the ship's head off shore, and her stern upon the rocks. The water gained upon them very fast, and the ship was soon full, when they cut away the masts. The main-mast went presently, and drove on shore, when the Caffrees clambered upon it to get the iron and copper. The foremast was some time before it went, and they could not clear it of the ship's side, as she remained with her head off shore, till she went to pieces, the sea breaking without her.

They hoisted out the yawl; but she was stove immediately. They then made a raft; but the seven-inch hawser, by which it was made fast, soon broke, and the raft drove on shore with four men on it; three of whom were drowned, but the other got safe to land. As soon as the ship was lost, two Lascars swam ashore with a lead-line, and made a hawser fast to a large rock on the shore. They then

then hove the hauser tort, and many of the sailors got on shore by that means; but the quarter-master, and eight seamen, were drowned, owing to the hauser slackening.

All the crew, excepting fifteen, reached the shore; but Robert Price, a boy, one of the four who reached England, was forced off the hauser, and his head dashed against the rock by a violent sea. The cut he received, of which the mark still remains, was so bad, that he was not able to help himself; and he would have been drowned, had not another seaman taken hold of his hair, and pulled him out of the sea, while others assisted to draw him up by the arms.

About noon the next day, the ship parted by the fore-chains, and soon after by the main-chains, at which instant almost an hundred persons were on board. As the ship lay down very much, they got the ladies, who were passengers, out at the starboard-quarter gallery, the people standing on the starboard side of the ship. When she parted, the side sunk down with them into the sea with them all upon it, and floated into shallow water. Here the sailors helped the ladies and children on shore, the body of the wreck breaking off the swell. Capt. Talbot, of the navy, who was a passenger, and some others, came ashore on the fore part of the ship.

They made a tent of the mizen top-sail for the ladies, &c. on the flattish part of the rock, where they found plenty of fresh water gushing out from several crevices.

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The ship was lost just to the northward of a rocky point, where was a high surf. A little to the northward was a sandy bite, where was a creek, into which many things drove, particularly a cask of wine, and one of their sows, which was killed against the rock. Plenty of timber from the wreck, as well as bombs and sails, were cast on shore, sufficient to have built and fitted some vessels, nor were the proper tools wanting. Plenty of beef and pork came on shore; but they took provision only for about eight or nine days, that being as much as they could carry. Of these, and of what cloaths they could pick up, the ship's steward made a proper distribution.

It was on Sunday morning the ship was lost, and on Wednesday morning they set out to travel to the Cape, the captain saying, that they would get there in sixteen or seventeen days at farthest, but he hoped in ten days. All their arms were five or six cutlasses. Plenty of fire-arms were indeed cast on shore, but they had neither powder nor shot. While they remained by the wreck, the natives offered no violence, but stole what they liked, and ran away.

When they set out, the chief mate was carried, he being sick; the second mate led the van, Capt. Coxon in the rear, and the ladies in the center. As soon as they marched, the natives threw stones, and hove their lances at them; but what mischief they did, is not mentioned. They travelled along the tops of
cliffs,

cliffs, never far from the coast, and generally in sight of the sea.

About three or four days after leaving the wreck, the captain, going up a very high hill, took a lance from one of the natives. There was no village then in sight; but he soon brought out many more natives armed with lances and targets. The captain put the ladies, and those who were unable to do any thing upon a rising ground with the baggage, and then attacked the natives and routed them.

They marched on, and met some other natives, from whom they got some sweet potatoes for buttons. After travelling some way, it began to rain a little, on which they made a fire of grass and tufts, there being no bushes near.

After resting a little, they went on, and took up their lodging for the night under some bushes at the top of a hill, with a running stream of fresh water in the hollow beneath.

The doctor was now taken ill, and would not move; so that they were obliged to leave him to the mercy of the barbarous natives, who plundered these unhappy travellers on every occasion, and pelted them with stones. At night they came to a salt-water river, and gathered wood to make a fire, but they could not strike a light. One of the Lascars, however, seeing a light on the other side of the river, swam over, and lighted a stick at a Cas-free hut, where he saw no people, but swam back

back over the river, and lighted a fire. As they had now no water, Col. James advised them to dig in the sand, which they did, and got water.

In the morning, the ladies waded over the river breast high, supported by the sailors, who carried over the children. This was about a week after leaving the wreck. After crossing the river, the Lascars left them first, and then some of the people set out, straggling, leaving the captain and ladies behind. The captain was not sick, but quite disheartened when they parted, though their provisions were not expended. These four men could give no count of the captain nor ladies after they parted, which was about ten days after the wreck. They say, that the natives never offered to carry away any of the ladies, nor offered them any injury, except taking their rings, or such like. There remained with the captain, when these people left him, twenty-five persons, officers and private men, twelve passengers, of which three were ladies, and five children, three misses and two masters, besides seven black servants.

The same day that they parted from the captain and ladies, they again came up with the Lascars in a small wood. A party of them went inland, and were three days out of sight of the sea, and four days without meeting with any inhabitants, though they saw some old huts, and many wild beasts, elephants, tigers, &c. but being distressed for provisions, they returned to the coast, where they
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fed on shell-fish, and fared pretty well, when they came up with a dead whale, of which they saw three or four. They did not eat of the first or second, having no knife, but made a shift afterwards to cut it with a spikenail, till Warmington found a knife in a boat upset on the shore.

In about three weeks or a month after parting with the captain and ladies, they came into a sandy country; but by this time they were separated into small parties, which daily decreased by deaths, brought on by fatigue and famine.

We must, therefore, now confine ourselves to the account given by Larey of his party.

After coming into the sandy country, they saw no natives. This country consists of sand-hills, which were so loose that they could not go over them, and could only travel at low water, where the sea ebbed and made it hard. They found rocks scattered on the shore in many places, and one rocky part to the sea, which they could only pass at low water, at which time they luckily came to it.

At this rocky place they saw some pieces of wood with nails in it, and afterwards a Dutch boat cast on the shore. A little before they came to Great Visch river, which was in sight from a rising ground, they passed a little gulley, where they were called to by Paddy Burne, Mr. Lillburne, Thomas Lewis, and Squires, who had reached that place; but the carpenter was dead, and had been there buried.

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This river is very broad at high water, and like a sea, but very narrow when the tide is out; and De Larso was almost drowned by the eddy tide in swimming across. The others passed in catamarans made of rattan wood and stumps of trees, which were brought down by the river, and thrown upon the shore. These they tied with their handkerchiefs, and the roots that grew on the sand twisted together. When they got on the other side of the river, they found a porpoise left among the rocks. De Larso caught hold of its tail, when it splashed him all over; but he at last struck it with a little knife and killed it.

They continued their journey, having stopped at a fresh-water creek, till they came to a pond where they found more fresh water, and there stopped again. They afterwards came to a great bay in the sandy country, when five of the party only remained together, and one of them here died. They buried him, said prayers over him, and then shook hands, swearing they would never separate again till they reached a christian country.

At this bay they were overtaken by Haynes and Evans, who told them, that Warming-ton was left behind almost dead; on which De Larso went back and fetched him. By this time they had found sand-creeper, which are a kind of cockles that hide themselves under the sand: so that they had plenty of provisions when joined by Haynes and Evans. The armourer went back with Evans to look for Mr. Lillburne, and others, but never returned,

turned, losing his own life to save his comrades. However, Evans returned the same night.

After leaving Sondage river, they came to a creek called Kuga, and then to Swarkops river, which is salt water; and from the tops of the hills they could see the islands in the bay of that river. While Larey was alone on a sand-hill gathering Hottentot figs, De Larso having laid down to sleep under a bush near him, he saw a man, whom he at first took for one of his companions; but on seeing a gun on his shoulder, he immediately ran to him as fast as he could, which was not very fast, his legs being swelled. He then fell down at his feet for joy, and called to De Larso, who spoke Portuguese. Their companions were below at a whale by the sea-side, as they intended to stop there three days; but when they were called, this man, named John Potosé, carried them to the house of Christian Feroos, with whom he seemed to be a partner.

They all remained there three days, and three days more at another house in the neighbourhood, when some were sent to Landrofs, and some to the Cape. Thirty or forty waggons and horses, with tents, and about an hundred people, were then sent off in quest of the people who were saved; but they returned in about a month without being able to reach the wreck, or meet with any of the people. They had no tokens of the ladies nor captain, except that they saw in a Caf-

free-house a great coat, which they thought was the captain's; but in their journey they saw several dead bodies.

Of all the people who escaped from the wreck, we as yet know but of eight who got to the Cape of Good Hope, the four who arrived in England, three who are gone to Denmark, and one who remained at the Cape. The most gloomy imagination cannot aggravate the miseries that must have been felt by these unhappy people immediately after the wreck. Behind them was the ocean, from which they had just escaped, and the shore strewn with the dead bodies of the more fortunate companions of their disastrous voyage; before them was a journey of upwards of five hundred miles, without arms or sufficient provisions, exposed to the rays of an African sun, through inhospitable and untrackless deserts, untrodden, except by the fierce barbarian, or the prowling savage.

While the melancholy fate of the Grosvenor cannot fail to raise the tender feelings of every humane bosom, the following account of a Portuguese vessel, which was wrecked, many years since, on the same inhospitable coast, will call forth the sigh of pity and humanity.

The poetical Don Emanuel de Souza was several years governor of Diu in India, where he amassed immense wealth. On his return to his native country, the ship, in which were his lady, all his riches, and five hundred men, his sailors and domestics, was dashed to pieces on the rocks of the Cape of Good Hope,

Hope, before any European settlement was made there. Don Emanuel, his lady, and his three children, with four hundred of the crew, escaped, having saved only a few arms and provisions. As they marched through the rude uncultivated deserts, some died of famine, some of thirst, and many of fatigue; others, who wandered from the main body in search of water, were murdered by the savages, or destroyed by the wild beasts. The horror of this miserable situation was most dreadfully aggravated to Donna Leonora, when she found her husband began to discover starts of insanity. At length, they arrived at a village inhabited by the Caffrees, or Ethiopian banditti. They were at first courteously received, and Souza, partly stupified with grief, at the desire of the barbarians, yielded up to them the arms of his company. No sooner was this done, than the savages stripped the whole company naked, and left them destitute to the mercy of the desert. The wretchedness of the delicate and exposed Leonora was increased by the brutal insults of the negroes; and her husband, unable to relieve, beheld her miseries. After having travelled about three hundred and twenty leagues, her legs swelled, her feet bleeding at every step, and her strength exhausted, she sunk down, and with the sand covered herself to the neck, to conceal her nakedness. In this dreadful situation, she saw two of her children expire, and her own death soon followed. Her husband, who had been long enamoured of her beauty,

beauty, received her last breath in a distracted embrace. He immediately snatched up his third child in his arms, and uttering the most lamentable cries, he ran into the thickest of the wood, where the wild beasts were soon heard to growl over their prey. Of the whole four hundred who escaped the waves, only twenty-six arrived at another Ethiopian village, whose inhabitants were more civilized, and traded with the merchants of the Red Sea. From hence they found a passage to Europe, where they related the unhappy fate of their companions.



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